

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. ILLUSTRATED.

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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The Yeomanry Tests and English Horsemanship.

THE rejection of so many candidates for the Imperial Yeomanry because they were unable to pass riding school tests has caused many people to imagine that horsemanship in England is decaying. There are many reasons existing to make such an opinion a probable one. The increasing poverty of country gentlemen and farmers and the popularity of the bicycle have no doubt on one side seriously diminished the number of those who ride for business or pleasure. But while the classes named above ride less than they did, there has sprung up an entirely new class of horsemen. The ranks of English riders have been largely recruited from among men of business. One famous hunt is almost entirely recruited and supported by the counter and the counting-house, and it is well known that men of business actively engaged are among the most successful

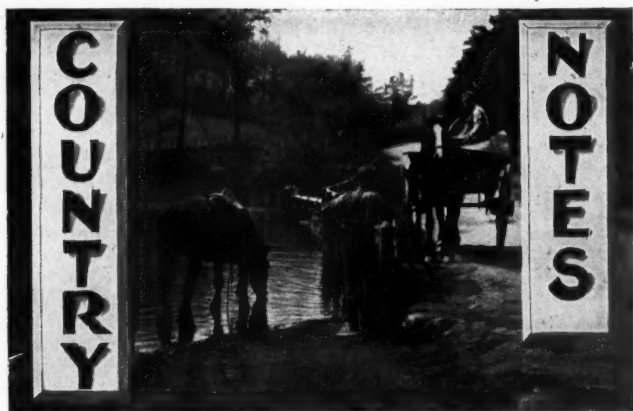
and enthusiastic followers of the game of polo. That polo is the best school for horsemanship no one can doubt; it is better even in some respects than the hunting-field. But in spite of the number of men who ride for business or pleasure, the percentage of rejections was very large, and the class of men rejected exactly those whom we might have expected to see accepted.

The fact that in some cases men who had ridden and hunted all their lives were rejected, and others whose experience of horsemanship was limited to a few lessons in a riding school were passed, may cause some reflection. It is very evident, to begin with, that the cavalry system of teaching riding is bad. The riding-masters who were called upon to conduct such trials showed themselves quite unable in many cases to rise to the occasion. The raising of the Imperial Yeomanry was to meet an emergency, and the men who joined it were not expected or desired to become cavalry soldiers. Whatever the motive for doing so, a riding-master had the power to reject any candidate, however good a horseman he might be. Now, if you take a man used to riding and put him upon a saddle of a different kind to that which he has been accustomed to, and give him, as we know was done in some cases, cavalry spurs, and then order out one of the old trick horses of the school, it is only a question of time how soon that man will find himself "on the floor." For the yeoman or mounted infantry corps, all that is wanted as a test is a roomy hunting saddle and a moderately steady horse. The candidate should be told to mount, and the way he does this will tell the experienced riding-master a good deal. Let him trot round the school with his stirrups a few times, then make him throw them across the front of the saddle and go round a few times. If the candidate sits fairly firm and does not cling to the reins he will be all right. Then put down the stirrups and send him over a flight of hurdles and the man will be all right. Everything else can easily be taught to a man who knows as much as this. But so simple and common-sense a test as this would be entirely beyond the grasp of the War Office. If the war in South Africa sweeps away the corrupt oligarchy from Pretoria, it will do a service to humanity at large. But if it also cleans out the Augean stable in Pall Mall, which fetters the British Army with unabashed incapacity, cowardly insolence, and pettifoggish management of great affairs, it will be a boon to Englishmen. This riding test has been of much advantage, for it has brought home to the voters the ill service to the nation given by the War Office, one of those public offices of which the industry is more dangerous than the idleness.

But to turn back again to the question of horsemanship, the methods of some riding-masters show that in the Army wrong ideals of riding prevail. The fact is the riding-master is not wanted in cavalry regiments; squadron officers should teach their own men to ride, assisted by a staff with a warrant officer called rough-riding sergeant-major at the head, to break the young horses and put the recruits through the preliminary exercises in the presence of one of the officers of the squadron. The squadron commander would, of course, be ultimately responsible for the riding of his men.

So much we learnt while the Imperial Yeomanry was being formed. Yet there were a good many active, able-bodied young fellows keen for service who were rejected for the most obvious ignorance and incapacity. Some did not know how to hold the reins, others which side to mount from, while others evidently suffered from that constitutional incapacity to ride a horse at all which has ere now deprived the Army of some otherwise useful men and officers. But the Imperial Yeomanry and the City Volunteers will have created a new and very expert class of horsemen by the time the war is over. They will have learnt horsemanship in the best possible way, for to gain real strength in the saddle the only plan is to spend long days on horseback in pursuit of our business. There are thousands of young Englishmen who would make mounted infantry or light cavalry of the very best class if only they had the necessary opportunities given to them. It is for the Government to see that for the future the opportunities are given. The past policy has been to obstruct everything that public spirit wished to do for the defence of the country or the training of our youth to arms. The war has taught the country that such obstruction is a most expensive thing. It would not have cost a twentieth part of the money to have had an efficient body of Militia, Yeomanry, or Volunteers that it has done to keep clerks to write snubbing letters, and then to spend millions in a panic-stricken endeavour to do in a moment what might have been done well and cheaply by a little foresight and common-sense. A single instance is worth a ton of declamation, and with a true story we will conclude. The scene is laid in Egypt, the time a kit inspection by the commanding officer of a regiment. We may say that there was an order that each man should have served out to him a cholera belt and a pair of blue goggles. The kits were neatly spread out, but when the commanding officer arrived at the last man in B Company he saw no blue goggles but two cholera belts. The company officer was asked the reason, and in turn enquired of the man: "I beg yer pardin, sir, but there

wasn't enough spectacles, so they served me out a cholera belt in loo of them blue goggles." The fun of this is that goggles and cholera belts are exactly of the same money value. So long as the accounts balanced, what did a case of ophthalmia more or less signify?



THE irony of fate has been somewhat strongly to the fore during the past week. Ambush the Second won the Grand National, to the great delight of all good sportsmen, for Ambush the Second is the property of that typically English gentleman, the Prince of Wales. Then on Monday morning the world learned to its horror and astonishment that a battery and a-half of Royal Horse Artillery and a convoy had walked straight into an ambush of Boers within a few miles of Bloemfontein. That was not Ambush the Third, or even the Thirteenth. In a word, the news was simply sickening. Yet, from those who have been in the country, it is to be gathered that it is made by Nature for ambuscades. To quote a sentence from a private letter of an officer at the front, "It is a beastly country and exactly suited to these brutes"; and, it must be remembered, the Boers know it thoroughly, and the horrible clothes in which they live, and move, and have their being, tend to make them invisible. Khaki really means dirt colour. It is the best imitation possible, but the clothes of the Boers are the real thing. They are as much better than the various shades of green and yellow which are called khaki as the clothes of the countrymen at small shoots who play the part of beaters are better than the clothes that the most fashionable shooting man can buy. Weather-beaten clothes are the really invisible green. Let us, therefore, not be too hard on men who walk into ambuscades in an unknown country, apparently with the simplicity of children.

All sorts of stories were heard a little time ago concerning the possibility of foreign intervention. But they are fading away, and one hears very little of them now. Nor is the reason far to seek. It is to be found in an analogue of a North Country story which reached us lately. A lady of a certain age, visiting the village in which her youth had been spent, asked whether many of the young men of the district were away at the front. The answer was, "Na, they dursent, not along of them big guns." It is precisely for that reason, and for no other, that our continental friends do not intervene. Those big guns and those big ships are too much for them. In fact, if this war has, in an indirect way, done us no end of good by stirring up our public spirit, Fashoda did us even more service by showing how great, when the pinch came, was the respect in which foreign nations held our Navy. So let it be. *Oderint dum metuant.*

The same lady also brought back a quite lovely story from the North which may be told at this moment, even in the middle of grave notes, in the sacred cause of light relief. A suffragan bishop was making a species of visitation or pilgrimage of the churches in the district assigned to him. Much to his delight he found one of them not, as is too often the case, locked and barred against all comers, but with doors hospitably open. To the sexton, in his most episcopal manner, quoth the bishop, "I see, my friend, that the doors of the church are open. Does the proper result follow? Do many people come in to pray?" The answer was prompt and disappointing: "I cotched 'em at it once, but I soon bundled them out."

Before Lord Roberts took the field in South Africa there were some reasonable complaints concerning the language used in official reports and despatches. For example, we were kept in suspense for some time as to the fate of a whole regiment of cavalry because the general in command left them wandering about Natal in one report, and forgot, in the next, to mention

that they had returned. Then there were those who complained that the military were somewhat prone to "purple patches" in description of the heroic conduct of troops. We confess to be better pleased with "the way we have in the Navy." Here, for example, is an example of commendable self-restraint in the report of Lieutenant Ogilvy, R.N., from Chieveley Camp, December 19th: "The way in which Nos. 1 and 2 guns' crews of the Terrible got their waggons out of the drift under heavy fire from shell and rifle was quite up to the standard expected of all seamen." That is the true English officer; the heroics should be left to the war correspondent.

Our available horse supply, if we only chose to take matters in time, is by far the largest in the world, that of Russia perhaps excepted. We have all the greatest horse-breeding grounds of the world to draw on, besides our own splendid stock, so long as we command the sea. In Germany, for instance, a European war would stop all agriculture. Every cart horse would be instantly "commandeered," and few or none could be brought there over seas. At the present moment, late, of course, but still available in time, horses are travelling to South Africa across every sea. Ship loads of Hungarian horses are embarking from Fiume on the Adriatic, Indian horses from Bombay and Kurrachi, New South Wales and Victorian horses, trained prairie horses (which will do anything but speak) from Canada, Argentine horses and ponies, United States horses, and even horses from Denmark. Some of the Australian Artillery horses are Suffolk punches bred in the colony. The total horse supply on which we are drawing, omitting that from the Baltic and Hungary, is over six millions!

Mention has been made before of the public spirit and the hereditary fighting instinct which compelled the Duke of Norfolk to relinquish high office and to go to the front. But it is still not too late to point out that in the Earl Marshall we are losing a public servant of inestimable value and of exceptionally kindly manners. No Postmaster-General since the days when the Penny Post was established has done nearly so much to bring the Post Office up to the requirements of the age, and the Duke's two great reforms, the Imperial Penny Post and the change in the letter rate, enabling a quarter of a pound to be sent for a penny, have been of vast importance. The Imperial Penny Post, like the two Jubilees and the war, has done yeoman service in consolidating the Empire. The reform as to weight of letter parcels has not only saved great expense, but has also saved no end of trouble to correspondents. The Government, we suspect, must have lost a good deal by it, for in the days which went before it was the common practice of at least one voluminous writer, who was probably a typewriter, to overstamp when there was doubt rather than to weigh a heavy letter. But it is hardly possible, even for a journalist, to write more than four ounces of nonsense in a day.

Meanwhile, the Post Office continues to pay remarkably well, and to be the milch cow of successive Chancellors of the Exchequer. Upon this, a contemporary observes that it ought to be an axiom, although it is not, that the profits of a department should be expended in extending the facilities given to customers: "Cheaper rates and more frequent distribution of letters would largely promote the commercial prosperity and individual happiness of the community." Commercial prosperity, perhaps, but as to individual happiness we have our doubts. The statement depends on the hypothesis that all letters are pleasant, but there are a good many persons, besides the impecunious, who would be quite contented with one delivery a day. Against this observation of our contemporary, we would urge that the worst of living in London is that from eight in the morning until half-past ten at night, one can never be certain of having done with the letters of the day, and that the only real holiday from care which can be obtained in these days is on board ship.

The Empress Frederick, the most accomplished of all the children of the Queen, whom the fates robbed at one and the same hour of a high-minded and royal husband and of the greatest position of any reigning female sovereign in Europe, except that held by her own royal mother, is once more to live among her own people. The White Lodge in Richmond Park, after the death of the Duke of Teck, was again at the disposal of the Queen, and it is understood that the Empress Frederick wishes to reside there during the summer months. Several of the smaller houses round the park are also the Queen's property. One of these she gave to Sir Richard Owen to use during his retirement. Sir Richard was the Empress Frederick's tutor in natural history and anatomy.

The choice of the Empress Frederick is an instance of the great liking which our Royal Family have always shown for good English scenery in general, and for that most representative bit of it contained in Richmond Park. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge are constant visitors there, and not only

the Duke, who is the Ranger, and always puts in four or five days' shooting there a year, but also the Prince, are always well "up" in everything that goes on there, the state of the trees, the increase of the deer and wildfowl, and the game. The Duke of Cambridge often ends up a day on his property at Coombe Woods in early October with a beat over the park and its paddocks, besides shooting the coverts later, while the Prince pays visits to the park frequently, and ends up his afternoon by taking tea with the superintendent in his pretty cottage.

It cannot be truthfully said that March was a very good month for the farm, though it is true that the land has dried up wonderfully, and the seed-bed is finer than at one time it seemed reasonable to expect. But the cold winds have retarded both the pastures and the wheat, and as roots are very generally exhausted it will be necessary to go to the expense of artificials to keep up the condition of stock. On crops the effect of the backward, inclement spring is painfully evident. Of course, nothing is yet so far gone but that leeway may be made up if the weather should change and April bring a few mild, soft weeks. At present, however, the outlook cannot be described as at all encouraging.

One point is being emphasised to an extraordinary degree as the year advances, viz., the dearth of rural labour. It transcends anything known to the experience of the oldest. The worst accounts seem to come from Norfolk, where it threatens to bring agriculture to a complete standstill; but the state of affairs in the home counties, particularly Essex and Herts, is as bad as it will ever be. Singularly enough, Parliament, while meddling in almost everything else, carefully avoids the subject, mainly, we fancy, because the politicians cannot make capital out of it. The Liberals do not like to admit that the policy of granting allotments has failed as far as it was intended to keep the labourers on the land, and the Conservatives are afraid of the question being used to foment a new agrarian agitation. We, who regard it from a strictly non-political point of view, cannot help wishing the rival parties would lay aside the differences so far as to agree to a thorough and impartial enquiry, for the question is obviously one of importance to the whole Empire.

The early part of this year has been noteworthy for the raid made on our best prize cattle by foreign buyers. Nearly all the champion animals of the last Maidstone Show have gone abroad, the United States, the Argentine, Canada, and France being the chief buyers. Our breeders no doubt are very well content, as they have received excellent prices. We hear, indeed, that one of the best known of them has under consideration at the present moment an offer, said to be of 1,000 guineas, for a famous bull. It will have been noticed that the bull sales at Birmingham and elsewhere have been very successful. That skill in breeding should meet with this kind of reward is what we all wish, but yet it is not a comfortable reflection that we are being depleted of the best of our stock, and that it is going into the possession of rivals who, be they ever so distant, are able to compete in our home markets with the aid of cheap freight and cold storage.

It is proverbially difficult to see two sides of a question, and certainly lovers of dogs find it very difficult to do justice to the excellent work accomplished, in face of a deal of growling, both human and canine, by the Board of Agriculture in the muzzling order that they have enforced so drastically and with the happy result of the virtual extinction of "rabies" in Great Britain. But with every wish to see both sides, and especially the side taken by the board that has done much good work of this particular question, it still does seem as if it were exercising its powers in rather too arbitrary a manner in refusing licences to bring dogs from abroad into this country. It has fenced about the permission to bring in foreign dogs with so many, no doubt excellent and reasonable, restrictions, that it is hard to see the grounds for refusal in some cases that have come under our notice. Had the petitioner for such a licence shown himself careless, or worse than careless, in his observation of the law in regard to any previous importation, the prohibition would be perfectly justified, but where there is no evidence of such previous laxity it is hard to see the motives that inspire some of the actions of the board.

A new idea that they are developing in France, rather to the terror of Masters of Hounds, is that of accompanying the *chasse* on automobiles. The bicycle on the road is not looked upon with the greatest favour at home, although horses have now grown fairly used to its aspect, but the bicycle has the advantage, from the point of view of the M.F.H., that it is likely to upset its rider if he ride into a hound, with more damage to the human than the canine person. The same cannot be said of a motor, which has the double disadvantage of being an object of terror to the average hunter and a distinct danger, unless carefully driven, to the hounds.

The price to which coal has risen in this present year of grace has had a tendency to turn back the hands of the clock in several of our country districts, and make people take to a class of fuel that was in more common use before coal came in as the chief and cheapest combustible. Wood and peat are the most obvious substitutes to which a return has been made. There are certain districts of the mainland of Scotland in which the history of the household fuel has been a curious one. For a while they burned the native peat, ever going farther and farther up the hillside in search of it, until at length they found it cheaper to buy peat shipped in Skye and brought across than the product of their native moors. Then came the period of the cheap coal, which virtually ousted the peat altogether; but now that coal has reached a price that is prohibitive they are again laying in stores of the peat fuel, as formerly.

It is almost certain, as a result of the wretchedly cold spring, that we shall have the deer yet again this year late in shedding the velvet from their horns. A late, cold spring, checking the growth of the pasture, seldom fails of this effect on them. What it seems to affect far less than the condition and actual growth of the horn is the weight of the beast by the time he becomes a quarry for the rifle. He can make up, as it would seem, for lost time in the matter of feeding and fattening himself, but cannot recover from the starvation that affects the growth, the very astonishing growth, of his horns. The deer forests have been so long and so generally covered with snow this winter that the deer have been about the homesteads a great deal, picking and stealing what was not intended for their use.

Naturally enough, the untimely winter, continuing right up to the end of March, has made all birds late in beginning their nesting business, and we may reasonably expect to find all the game backward when the season comes for the shooting of its various kinds. On the other hand, experience of former years by no means tends to show that a hard and even a prolonged winter has any ultimate evil effect on the broods. That is a matter which the future has in its keeping. There is no reason that coveys should not be big and strong, but there is every reason to think that they are not likely to be forward.

A fortnight ago the storks returned to Holland from the Nile Valley. At the same time one straggler appeared in Romney Marshes. The date shows the astonishing regularity of storks' migrations, for of those recorded as visiting this country in early spring nearly all are recorded between the beginning of the third week in March and the first of April. The third week in March is their usual time of arrival in Holland.

Since the horrible act of the management of Kensington Gardens by which in 1880 700 large trees, most of them quite sound, and many of them 100ft. high, were cut down in the big grove in the gardens, the rooks which lived there have been wanderers on the face of London. The big rookery then existing in the gardens was in itself evidence that the trees were sound; indeed, the men employed begged to be allowed to spare some of them, though they would have lost money by it. But it was no use, and trees and rookery were destroyed. This year a few pairs of these wandering rooks, which have never yet found a firm abiding-place, have concluded to build in Hyde Park. Three nests have been built nearly opposite Knightsbridge Barracks, and other rooks are evidently thinking of joining them.

Last year the sardine fishery on the Biscayan Coasts was a good deal spoilt by the presence of a large whale, which seemed to have got itself "cornered" in the wedge of the bay of which the Bidassoa's estuary makes the apex. All the sea here, for something like 200 miles out, is very shallow, so one can imagine the commotion that a rather badly flustered whale would make on finding himself threatened by stranding among the sardine population. Naturally enough the fishery did not prosper with such a large disturbing influence about. But it is not a little singular that this year again, so far as the season has gone, very little has been doing, and surely this cannot be occasioned by fear of last year's whale. In any case, whatever the reason, the fact is too true that the sound of the look-out man's horn has been seldom heard (they post a man on watch for sardines in the bay, whose duty it is to sound his horn, on their appearance, to summon the fishermen to the boats), even though the Shrovetide ceremony of the "Interlo de los sardinos" has taken place, with all its childish pageantry, in all the Biscayan villages that the sardine fishery concerns. Luckily these Basques are not wholly dependent on their fisheries; but, of course, their degree of success makes a difference to them.

The most interesting of all "railway animals," far cleverer than any collecting or travelling dog, or than the birds which have built in railway trucks and lived a locomotive life with their young, was the famous Cape Railway baboon, which for some years was one of the celebrities of the colony. In answer

to a question whether this animal is still alive, the Rev. Bernard Price, chaplain to the forces, writes from the camp on the Touws River to say that it is dead, and gives details of what it used to do. Its master was an old railway servant at Uitenhage, near Port Elizabeth, who had lost both legs. His tame baboon was in the habit of pushing or pulling him down the line on a trolley. It would then turn the points for him, under his supervision, and push him back home. This is the only authenticated instance, to

the best of our belief, of a monkey being trained to use its hands in useful work and service. Mr. Price adds that the baboons are still very common in the west of Cape Colony, and do not confine themselves to the mountains. They regularly rob the cornfields on the flats, and invariably post sentinels. In fact, they behave just as Captain Marryat describes them in the curious story of the escape of the English prisoners from the Cape Dutch inserted in "Masterman Ready."

ON THE GREEN.

EVER since Christmas there has been a singular lull in golfing affairs, a singular lack of interest in them, for the good reason that there has been little in which to take any interest. For this it is not hard to account. There is the over-mastering interest of the war, that makes all lesser things seem of no account; we have lost three of our greatest players, one, alas, for ever. The others, Vardon and Mr. Ball, may come back, but of that even there seem doubts. And, finally, the weather has been altogether so abominable that even under much better auspices golf would have failed to give



NEVILLE MAKES HIS FIRST DRIVE.

pleasure. Even at Cannes the weather has put a stop to golf for a while, and competitions have perforce been deferred, while at Pau and Biarritz the temperature has been a little higher, but in all other respects the weather has approximated to that which we have enjoyed so much at home. At Cannes Mr. Doubleday, an American player, seems to have had a deal of success in the many prize meetings on the Napoule course. At Pau they have had Mr. J. B. Pease, Mr. Boreel, Mr. Elwes, Mr. Dubs, and so on. Mr. Boreel seems to have found his form again, and lately won a scratch competition with a score of 83 that was four strokes better than the next best sent in. All these players, with the exception of Mr. Boreel, moved on to Biarritz later, and some of them took part in the competition for the Town of Biarritz Shield, a challenge prize open to members of any club in the South of France. Mr. Horace Hutchinson was the winner with a score of 78. A three ball match at Pau, in which Massie, the Biarritz professional, took part with Lloyd



BEVERIDGE AT 18TH HOLE.

and Dominique, ended in Lloyd's favour by seven holes, the other two halving.

This match, Lloyd, Dominique, and Massie, had a rather special interest. Lloyd is English, Dominique a Béarnais, Massie of the Pays Basque. So it was an international affair, that had been made the more interesting by a beating that Dominique had given Lloyd the week before. In a previous match between Dominique and Massie the former had just won. Lloyd was no doubt determined to do his best, his outraged honour being at stake, and he upheld that honour, restoring his prestige gallantly. It is quite interesting to see how the native French and Basques take to golf, practising on all opportunities and getting fine free swings. If golf was not a matter that always defeated one's best calculation, one would be disposed to forecast a great future for the Basques in golf. The national game of pelota is one that teaches them the knack of concentrating all their strength on a given point, a given blow. The way they put every ounce of their weight and muscle into the pelota ball as they drive it back against the wall

of the court (that is to say, in the game of rebot, which is the common form of pelota among the French Basques, who alone see golf) is a sight to be remembered. And surely it is just this concentration of strength at a right point and moment that goes far to make good golf. Nevertheless, so far as we have yet seen, the Frenchman, with no particular aptitudes by inheritance or by education, is quite the equal of the Basque, in spite of his training in



HILL-THOMPSON HOLES OUT.

the pelota. But what the Basque shall be capable of remains yet to be proved.

The result of the Oxford and Cambridge golf match was not a surprise in the sense that Oxford's victory was at all contrary to expectation. Far from that, it had been indicated by the result of the trial matches; but what was contrary to expectation, and scarcely foreshadowed by matches that had been played

before, was the immensely heavy balance by which Oxford won. Not a single Cambridge man of the whole eight scored a single hole, and the victories were gained by anything from fourteen holes downward. There can be no doubt—indeed the scores that were returned prove it—that the Oxford side is a very strong one this year, probably the strongest University team that has ever come to the tee.

THE UNIVERSITY BOAT RACE.

THE so-called University Boat Race of 1900 may be described by a combination of superlatives. The day was most superb, the Cambridge crew were most excellent, the Oxford crew were most atrocious. The writer of these lines is a person of the darkest blue prejudice. He never himself rowed in an Oxford crew, partly because nobody ever asked him to do so, partly because he had other athletic preoccupations. Still, even in those days of long ago he used to frequent the river when the "eights" were to the fore and when "torpids" were on, and occasionally, for sheer love of sport, he used to row in scratch college eights from which pewter pots of great capacity resulted. Afterwards, driven by hunger, he was for many years in the habit of reporting the practice of the University crews, and of writing accounts of the annual race. Once, indeed, he performed the record feat of writing six accounts of the University Boat Race, all different, and all critical, on the same day. But he regrets to say that, with the single exception of one set of scratch eights at Christ Church, in which the winning boat contained four members of the 'Varsity Association football team, he cannot recollect anything to compare in point of badness with the Oxford crew of 1900. Every kind of allowance ought, of course, to be made for shocking ill-luck; the Dark Blue eight, who never had time to become much to boast of, began by losing their coach, who went to serve his Queen in South Africa. They then passed from his charge to that of Mr. D. H. McLean, who is really an excellent coach, but on the Friday evening before the race the writer saw Mr. D. H. McLean in the foyer of the St. James's Theatre looking about as sad as it was possible for a healthy man to look. He was starting for South Africa next morning, but that was not the reason of his melancholy, for, in fact, he cannot have failed to have been conscious that the crew he had coached were, through no fault of their own, the worst on record. In the course of training they had lost four men, and those who saw the boat for the first time during the race jumped at once to the conclusion that those four men must have been the best. To



Photo.

CAMBRIDGE FIRST, OXFORD NOWHERE.

Copyright

describe the race as a race is simply out of the question. There was no race at all, and perhaps the better plan will be to attempt to convey an impression of "things seen"—to borrow an expression from a contemporary. The point of view was a beautiful house with a balcony immediately opposite Chiswick Eyot, and outside the race there were numerous interesting things to see. First, there was brilliant sunshine and smooth water. Next, at the time appointed for the race to begin, the water was very low, and it was patent that there was abundant time to lunch in "mighty ease and comfort" before the crews could possibly come in sight. There was time, too, to note a persistent pair of swans, resident lower down the river than any others which from time immemorial have tried to rear a brood on Chiswick Eyot and have failed. Then there were nigger minstrels below, and steamers taking their places along the river bank, and on the far side of the river a thick fringe of spectators. Then came a call, "They are coming!" and a murmur growing to a roar of shouting. But they were not really coming at all.

For a long time one could see nothing except the Cambridge crew swinging along at a great pace on the flood tide in perfect style, and with every man rowing well within himself. This much at least was certain: Mr. W. A. L. Fletcher had impressed his lesson in oarsmanship upon Cambridge last year in a manner that could not be forgotten. Time, swing, and leg-action were as good as they could be; not a fault could be found. The crew were emphatically a beautiful sight. Those who saw least of them were what are termed by courtesy privileged spectators, that is to say, the "old Blues" and the men on the Press boat. For the Cambridge crew, to use the words of the old school song, did "love to glide on a flowing tide in a galley fast and free," and the eight men in the Oxford boat, behind which the steamers must needs keep, were labouring away nearly a quarter of a mile behind them.



Photo.

THE CROWD BY THE WINNING-POST.

Copyright

And so the race went on to the end, Cambridge maintaining their splendid form, which is always an easy matter to the crew which have the race in hand, and Oxford splashing and rolling away doggedly behind. By how many lengths Cambridge really won does not matter at all. It is the impression of the writer that if they had chosen they could have won by a mile.

Nobody—not even the most ardent admirer of Oxford, that is to say, even the writer himself—grudges Cambridge their victory. They deserved it 100 times over, but it was 1,000 pities that so good a crew could not be more worthily opposed, so that there might have been some chance of writing an account of the race. What makes it more unfortunate that the Cambridge crew should have met such incapable opponents is the fact that, even unpressed, they tied the record time. Under pressure they could certainly have done infinitely better, especially as the tide was very strong and the conditions of rowing were generally as good as they could be. There were folks who said that it might be described as a procession, but that was clearly wrong. In the nature of things, a procession must not only have constituent parts, but something in the nature of coherence and succession. When the first boat is out of sight before one can see the second, procession is not the word, but fiasco.

From the general point of view, however, the result is not to be regretted. Twice in the history of the hardest and most honest boat race that the world can show there have been periods when fortune was so one-sided for many years that it seemed hardly worth while for Cambridge to continue to renew the challenge. From 1861 to 1869 inclusive Oxford won a continuous series of victories. From 1890 to 1898 the story was the same, and it almost seemed that it was impos-



Photo

OPPOSITE THE BOATHOUSE AFTER THE RACE.

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sible for men trained on the sluggish Cam to match themselves with any hope of success against men who had had their practice on that beautiful stretch of the Isis between Oxford and Iffley, or when it came to a matter of a long course between Oxford and Sandford. But the decisive victory

of Cambridge with an Oxford coach last year, and their easy triumph of last Saturday, distinctly prove that the true principles of oarsmanship may be instilled on the Cam as well as on the Isis, and that the main cause of the long series of defeats from which Cambridge suffered prior to 1899 was to be found in the fact that they were being badly coached. True it is that both crews, in these days, leave their home waters at a very early period in their



Photo.

THE LIGHT BLUES FEEL PLEASED.

Copyright

training, when the Light Blues betake themselves to the Ouse and the Dark Blues accept the ready hospitality of some "old Blue" on the banks of the Thames. But it is the early training which really makes the oarsmen, and it is now clearly proved, not for the first time, that they may begin with excellent results on the very worst water.

University Sports at Queen's Club

A CURIOUS similarity of misfortunes was experienced by the Cambridge Athletic Club and the Oxford eight, but it is probable that in neither case was the final result altered. On the day of the sports Cambridge found itself short of its two best athletes. Hind, of cricket fame, was timed at Cambridge to have run 100 yds. in 9 4-5 sec., but was incapacitated by influenza from proving his mettle at Queen's Club; and Davison, who won a sensational victory in the quarter-mile last summer against the Americans, sprained his ankle on the eve of the sports in dodging an errant collie dog that took a sudden fancy for the path. Both men would no doubt have run good races,



Photo.

CAMBRIDGE PUT THEIR BOAT TO BED.

Copyright

but 100yds. have been often run in wonderful time at Cambridge, and C. R. Thomas, with the prestige of three victories behind him, would have been hard to beat. Davison, also, was known not to be in his best form, and, like his second string, would probably have found Holland too quick for him up the straight.

In spite of the beauty of the day, the crowd was much smaller than usual and much less enthusiastic. There was in prospect no great duel, like that between Jordan and FitzHerbert, to attract specialists, and in fact none of the races were really well contested. The dead-heat in the 100yds. was between two Oxford men, and the only other "near thing" was a tie for third place between the two Cambridge high jumpers, an occurrence not calculated to arouse explicit enthusiasm. Yet on paper, and for those who regard records as not less important than races, almost every event reached a high standard. Paget-Tomlinson again showed himself to be perhaps the best hurdler that either University has produced, and Garnier, who was second, showed collateral and inherited genius. Workman nearly reached even time in the three miles, and every event but the long jump (in which Jones was nervous, not injured) was up to a high average level.

For the second year the programme contained ten events, and the arrangement is to hold good for one more year. After that the committees of the two clubs will meet and finally make up their minds whether the weight or hammer, or the newly-added half-mile, shall be dropped. It is almost certain that the half-mile will be retained, and possibly, now that the hammer-throwers are returning to their old-time vigour, the other exciting pastime of putting the weight will be made to disappear. For the first time in a great many years the subject was not

discussed at the dinner held after the sports, and the omission was not regretted.

It would be impossible to imagine any meeting regulated with more precision than the Inter-University Sports. Though the bulk of the people had not arrived, the pistol for the 100yds. was fired at half-past two to the minute. By the use of flags and the invaluable megaphone the crowd all round the ground is kept informed of the exact progress of each event, and the duller events are doubled, the weight with the high jump and the hammer with the long jump.

Our Portrait Illustration.

MRS. ARTHUR PAGET is one of the numerous American ladies who have shown their sympathy with the Mother Country during her trouble in an energetic and useful fashion. She is the daughter of Mr. Faran Stevens of New York, and the wife of Colonel Arthur Paget of the Scots Guards. It will no doubt occur to our readers that Paget's Horse are among the special contingents of Yeomanry which have been raised in connection with the war. Colonel and Mrs. Arthur Paget live at 35, Belgrave Square, S.W.

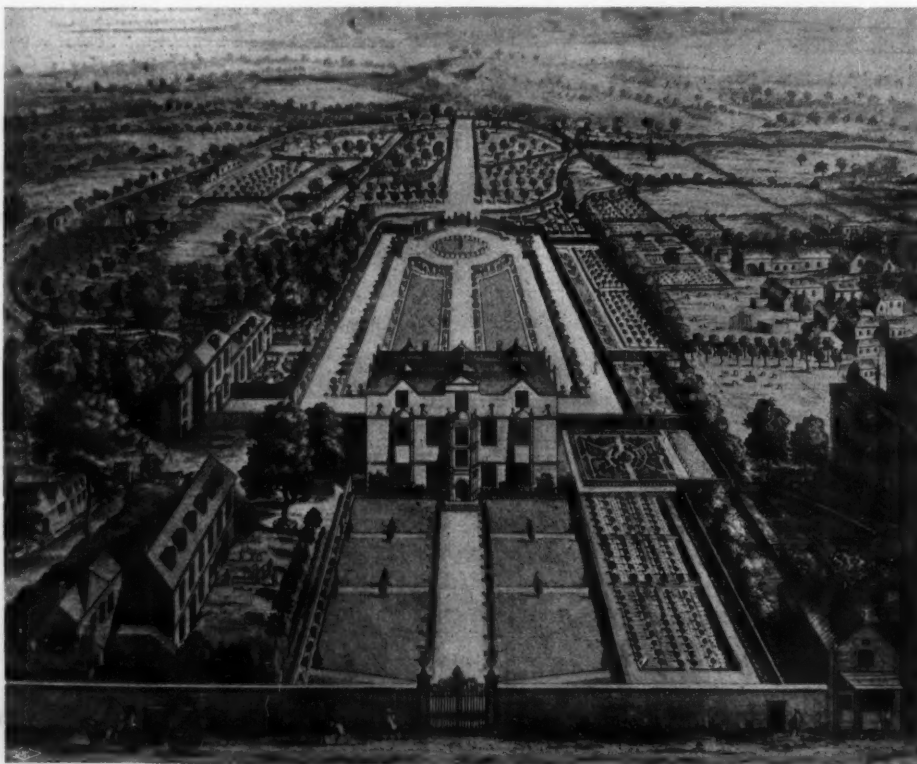


THE English character being essentially more matter-of-fact than the continental, it is only to be expected

that what was done here should have been rather more reserved than what was done abroad. The extreme elaboration that we find carried into every detail of a foreign lay-out was seldom followed in England. Compared with the princely scheme at Hanover, described in the last paper, there is something rather homely in that of the abbey at Cirencester, of which an old view is given. A little set back from the street stands the house, with dignified tall bay windows overlooking a forecourt, laid out in plots of green and gravel paths. This court was not for carriages, but according to the older custom it was crossed on foot by arrivals at the gate. To the left of it are stables and base-court. To the right is a fruit garden as far as the butcher's paddock, and a small parterre by the house. Then comes the large pleasure garden, central with the building. Enclosed by fruit walls, it is terraced on three

sides, and laid out in gravel, turf, and flower beds with true English simplicity. On the left of this is an orangery, herb and fruit gardens to the right, and an irregular kind of grove beyond. The house in this case is no doubt earlier than most of the garden, and the court beyond the house somewhat later than the forecourt. It will be noticed that there is no grove here within the walls, and the shaping of the further end of the main garden has an air of French design about it. By degrees the French and

Dutch influence was becoming general all over England. The planting was to form a wide-spread scheme focussing upon the house, and reaching far over the park into the neighbouring woods. Then, too, in all low-lying situations great canals of formal water were to come into vogue, and perhaps of all the improvements that emanated from the years surrounding 1700, these canals through the heart of the groves were the finest. Sheltered on every side, and with the surface of a mirror, nothing can surpass the beauty of



THE ABBEY, CIRENCESTER.

reflection that they afford. Level lawns sweep along the brink, and mighty elm and beech spread out a canopy overhead to the water's edge.

Even where the groves did not happen to lie in a valley the long canals were not abandoned. Some spring would be tapped at a higher level still, and a dyke following the contour of the hill be made to conduct a supply to the canals, and through them, perhaps, to the fountains in the gardens. The canal in the illustration is fed in this way from a spring some three-quarters of a mile distant. There is a splendid instance at Wrest, of which a drawing appears in "The Formal Garden"—a T-shaped piece of water with groves on either side, and a domed pavilion at the further end. Here there was no difficulty in the supply, as the formal water lies on the same level as the neighbouring stream, of which it practically forms a branch.

But far the largest attempt at formal water in England is the Long Canal at Hampton Court. It measures 1,150 yds. by 42 yds., and was made by Charles II., in competition, no doubt, with similar work still more colossal in extent that was being

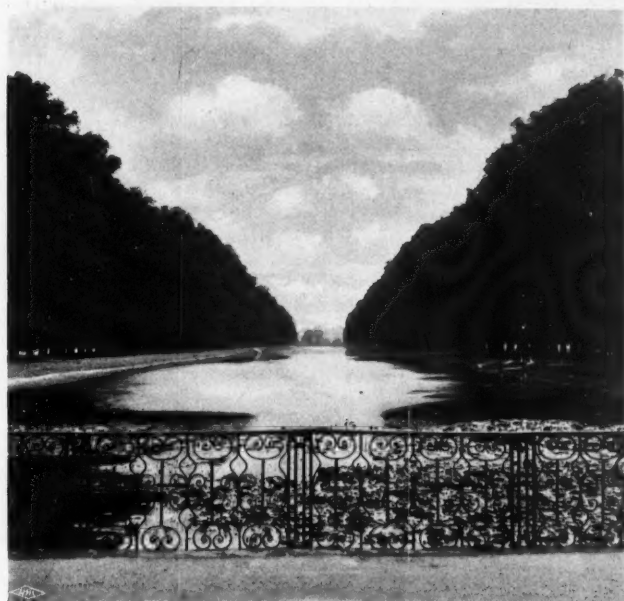


A CANAL.

done at Versailles. The Longford River, a small stream that flows through Bushey Park, was called in to feed the Long Canal, and in the reign of William III. the large circular pool, now called the Diana Fountain, was drawn from a point higher up the same stream.

Before these extensive water schemes broke the bounds of the garden proper and spread into the greater lay-out, formal water, too large to be correctly described as a fountain, often formed a conspicuous feature in the smaller. There are instances of this at Drayton, Shipton, and elsewhere, and they were no doubt the survivals of the fish-stews of monastic times. Perhaps it hardly occurred to people of the period that they were ornamental as well as useful.

The writer happens to possess a series of views of Hampton Court at various periods, and it is exceedingly interesting to watch the development of the lay-out there towards the close of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth. The climax of grandeur seems to have been arrived at in that reproduced in the text. The view looks out over that side of the palace on which the efforts of William III. had mostly been concentrated. In the foreground is displayed the



THE LONG WATER, HAMPTON COURT.

arc of the great fountain garden, with the three radiating avenues, and the start of the long canal. Thirteen fountains with elaborate parterres of broderie and turf work fill the semi-circle.

The paths are bordered with sentinel yews, and rich grilles of wrought-iron lead to the avenues. Under the shadow of the palace to the left is the Privy Garden, and beyond are the smaller gardens belonging to the Tudor Palace, the orangery, and so forth. To the right of the palace an enclosure some 200 yds. wide contains the wilderness. This consists of groves and hedges, with turf alleys radiating from a central circle to the four corners, and other paths of gravel penetrating the groves in every direction to the maze, the mount, or to an intricate arrangement of clipped greenery called Troy Town. All this has been purposely treated in a very conventional manner by the engraver for reasons given in a previous paper, and accordingly it presents an appearance much as if the groves had been fretted out of a block of wood and plotted in position. Beyond the wilderness can be seen the beginning of the Bushey Park Avenues and the great Diana Fountain, which was possibly not completed at the time that the drawing was made. These avenues were intended to form a grand approach to the north front of the palace, and a forecourt was planned by Wren, which was to have been thrown out to meet them across the wilderness. But with the death of King William this was abandoned.

At first sight it would seem that we have very little of all this left at the present day, but on a closer inspection there is much that we can recognise. At any rate, we have the three great avenues and the long canal in the foreground, the former vastly increased in beauty by age and growth. The grilles by Tjouw are some at South Kensington, some at Bethnal Green, and some inside the palace. Of the thirteen fountains in the Great Fountain Garden only the centre one remains, and of the magnificent parterre some few of the yews still survive, though they have long since grown



FORMAL WATER AT DRAYTON.

into forest trees, and are no longer conscious of forming any familiar features in a great design. The Broad Walk, nearly half a mile in length, remains as a never-failing source of delight in summer and autumn, for its borders are among the few public places where flowers are grown as if to be loved rather than to be wondered at.

The Privy Garden has become rather more of a grove than a parterre, but the fountain still remains, and the old yews have bowered it about with no great loss to the painter. The old Tudor Gardens are quite unchanged, but their ornaments had probably disappeared before the date of the drawing.

Turning to the wilderness, we find less that is easily recognisable. The main lines are there, but the hedges have not been kept up, the turf glades are gone, and the maze is all that remains pretty much as it was. No one needs to be reminded that the avenues and fountains in Bushey Park still remain to us. This magnificent sweep of line and mass, the golden figures mirrored in a vast shimmering circle, and the wealth of shadow under the spreading chestnuts, have tempted the writer to spend more than one long summer's day among the deer with brush and pencil.

(To be continued.)

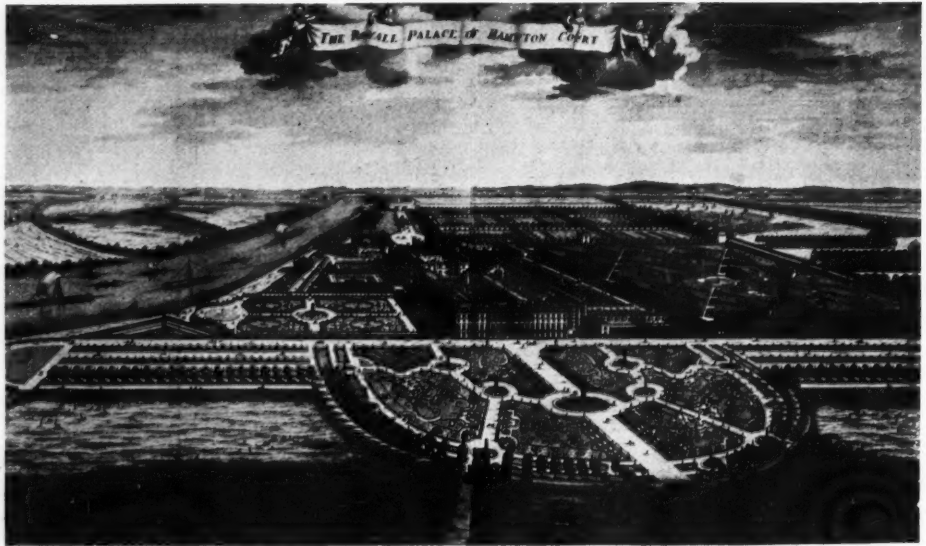
Vignettes from Nature.

THE peculiarly wild whistle of the curlew comes from out the night sky, and swifts screech for an hour after darkness has fallen. We are by the covert-side, and a strange churring sound comes from out the darkened glades. Waiting silently beneath the bushes, it approaches nearer and nearer, until a loud flapping is heard. The object approaches quite closely, and it is seen that the noise is produced by a large bird striking its wings together as they meet behind. Even in the darkness it may be detected that each wing is crossed by a definite white bar. The bird is a goat-sucker or nightjar. Had we it in our hand, we should see that it was a connecting link between the owls and the swallows, having the soft plumage and noiseless flight of the one and the wide gape of the other. The object of the noise it produces is probably to disturb from the bushes the large night-flying moths upon which it feeds. The name goat-sucker the bird has from a superstitious notion that it



THE BROAD WALK, HAMPTON COURT.

sucks goats and cows—a myth founded probably upon the fact of its wide gape. It is certain that these birds may often be seen flitting about the bellies of cattle as they stand knee-deep in the summer pastures. The reason of this is obvious, as there insect food is always abundant. Unless disturbed, the nightjar rarely comes abroad during the day, but obtains its food at twilight and dusk. Upon the limestone-covered fells it conforms marvellously to its environment, it being almost impossible to detect its curiously mottled plumage as it basks upon the grey stones, not more still than itself. Here it lays its two eggs, often without the slightest semblance of a nest, frequently upon the bare rock. Quite a peculiar interest attaches to the bird, inasmuch as it is furnished with a remarkable claw, the use of which is guessed at rather than known. This is serrated on its inner edge, and from actual experiments made upon nightjars



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF HAMPTON COURT.

in captivity, we should surmise that its use is to free the long whiskers from the soft, silvery dust which usually covers the bodies of night-flying moths. Certain it is that this substance gets upon the whiskers of the bird, and that the long hairs referred to are combed through the serrated claw. About the mouth the goat-sucker is very swallow-like. It has a bullet-shaped head, large eyes, and a wide gape. Like the swallows, too, it has a weak, ineffective bill and weak feet. This is explained by the fact that the bird, except when nesting, is rarely seen on the ground, and that it captures its insect prey on the wing. From twilight till daybreak does the fern-owl "chur" and fly through the night.

In coming to this country, woodcocks generally travel in the night and against a head wind. Those which are exhausted pitch upon the East Coast, and here lie resting until nightfall, when they pass on. The probability is that if these birds had not experienced a rough passage they would not have touched the eastern seaboard, but would have kept well in the upper currents of the air, and first dropped down in our western woods or even those of Ireland. The migratory bodies are usually preceded by flocks of tiny goldcrests; and so invariable is this rule that the latter have come to be called "woodcock pilots." The males precede the females by a few days, the latter bringing with them the young that have been bred that year. It is a point worthy of notice, and one upon which much confusion exists, that the birds that come to us are usually in the best condition. Soon after their arrival they disperse themselves over the leaf-strewn woods, the same birds being known to resort to the same spots for many successive years. They seek out the warmer parts of the wood, and in such secluded situations sleep and rest during the day. At dusk they issue forth in their peculiar owl-like flight to seek their feeding grounds. Like many birds, they have well-defined routes, and daily at twilight may be seen flying along the rides and paths of the woods or skirting along certain portions of plantations. Coppice belts they like best, especially such as contain spring runs. It is here that the bird most easily finds food, the soft ground enabling it to probe quickly and to a considerable depth in search of earth worms. These constitute its principal diet, and the quantity that a single bird will devour is enormous. The long mobile bill of the woodcock is a study in itself. The rapidity with which the bird uses it in following the worm in the ground is marvellous. It is extremely flexible—so much so as to be bent and twisted into every shape without suffering harm—and it is as sensitive as flexible. Every sportsman knows that woodcocks are here to-day, gone to-morrow. He often finds that where there were plenty yesterday not a single cock remains. Ireland, perhaps, affords the best shooting. It was here that the Earl of Clermont shot fifty brace in one day. This feat was the result of a wager; and the bag was made by two o'clock in the afternoon with a single-barrelled flintlock. The birds were shot in a moist wood; and it is in such spots on the mild West Coast that the woodcock finds its favourite haunt. In England the birds affect coppice woods, frequenting most those which are wet, and such as have rich deposits of dead and decaying leaves. Most of these copses are of oak and birch and hazel, and being only a few years' growth are thick in the top. Killing cock, as they dash through the twigs of these and seldom rising above the bushes, is one great test of a shooter's skill. Then the birds have a habit of dropping down at a short distance, which almost invariably deludes the inexperienced gunner. When put up from their resting-places during the day the flight is rapid; at evening it is slow. It is now that they are easiest to shoot, though in some parts of the country they are still taken in nets as they fly at dusk through the paths of the woods. Netting woodcocks was at one time the common way of taking them, for they have always been highly esteemed as food. Another method of capture was by gins and springes, and it would seem that in times past the "woodsnipe" was considered a stupid bird.

The British eiders are essentially sea-ducks, rarely even entering rivers, and seldom roving far inland. Occasionally found in our southern seas, they become more numerous as we ascend the East Coast, until upon the Farnes, off Northumberland, we reach their most southern breeding haunts. On Holy Island and Lindisfarne a few pairs of St. Cuthbert's ducks have bred time out of

mind. Except during times of nesting, the whole life of the bird seems spent upon the element whence it derives its food—crustaceans mainly—and this it always obtains by diving. In their northern breeding haunts the eiders begin to collect about the first week in May, and by the end of the third week most of the ducks have begun to lay. As soon as the colony has got well about this business the drakes leave the land, and for weeks may be seen between the islands, or spreading themselves down the coast-line in search of favourite feeding grounds. They never go far from the ducks, however, nor do they at this time take long flights. In fact, the eider, unlike most ducks, is not migratory at any season, and seldom stays far from the spot where it was bred. During the nesting season, as at all others, the plumage of the male and female birds is very dissimilar. In the former, the upper part of the head is of a rich velvety black, while the sharply-contrasting neck and back are of the purest white; beneath, the plumage is black. At the same period the female is of a subdued rufous brown, with more or less dark markings; the tail feathers are now nearly black. The colonies of breeding eiders often consist of an immense number of birds, and the nests lie so thickly together that it is difficult to avoid

stepping into them. They are usually placed upon some slight elevation; and here in any depression the duck collects a small quantity of seaweed and drift stuff, which she forms into a felty mass by kneading it with her breast. Upon this four or five eggs are laid in the course of a week; the eggs are pale green, resembling those of the heron. Even before the last egg is laid it is seen that a few feathers are scattered about the nest, and as incubation proceeds these increase in quantity. For the sitting bird covers her treasures over with down plucked from her breast; this she does day by day, until a very considerable quantity buries the eggs. If the eiders are sitting under natural conditions the eggs are hatched in about twenty-six days, and the young birds are almost immediately taken down to the water. They show no hesitation in entering the sea, and, once upon it, are quite at home. It is here that they sun themselves, feed, and sleep. On a rock-bound bit of coast it is interesting to watch the ducklings paddling along by the stones and feeding upon the tiny bivalves that are common along the bays and inlets.

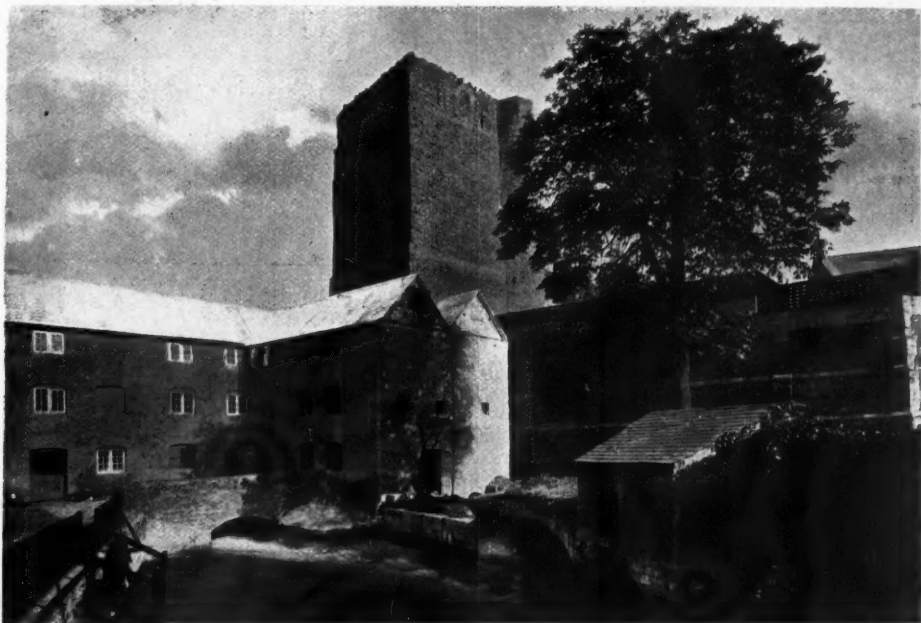
RUSTICUS.

(To be continued.)

THE ANCIENT MILLS OF OXFORD.

ALMOST the greatest loss to country scenery is the decay of the windmills and water-mills. The first has robbed the hilltops of a most picturesque feature, while in the valleys and little glens the roaring, creaking, dripping wheel rolls round no longer, except in favoured spots where it still pays to grind the corn in the old way. The old town and city mills often survived longer than the country ones. The corn and barley which was taken to market in the town was easily transferred to the town mill, and thence by water to the place of consumption. Every Wykehamist remembers the ancient and picturesque mills of Winchester, with the mill stream bridged by the main street. At Oxford some of the most ancient mills remain to this day, while others have only recently been destroyed, or have undergone a curious conversion into dwelling-houses, beneath which the mill stream still rushes. One of these houses stands near Folly Bridge; another old mill has just undergone the same process, that close to Holywell Church.

Some of these mills are the most ancient surviving institutions in Oxford, far older than the colleges, older even than any of the churches, except perhaps one. Some of them, the Castle Mill for instance, have ground corn for centuries, since the abbeys for whose use they were founded utterly disappeared. Others were standing long before abbeys or colleges were founded, and were part of their endowments. They are the oldest link between town life and country life left in Oxford, or indeed in England. For a thousand years the corn grown on the hills beyond the Thames meadows has been drawn to their doors. Saxon churls dragged wheat there on sledges, Danes rowed up the river to Osney and stole the flour when they sacked the abbey, Norman bishops stole the mills themselves. That



H. W. Taunt. "THAT ANCIENT MILL UNDER THE CASTLE."

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iniquitous Roger of Salisbury was "in" this, as we might guess. Roger, who knew that attention to detail is the soul of business, "commandeered" this particular mill with others in those parts, and when forced to let it go, with a fine sense of humour made it over to Godston Nunnery as a pious donor.

The Knights Templars had another mill at Cowley, and the King himself one on the Cherwell, which was given to the Hospital of St. John, who "swapped" it with Merton. Later on these mills helped King Charles's army vastly, for all the flour needed for the Oxford Garrison was ground inside or close to the walls.

At present the Thames is mainly valued as a source of rest and refreshment to tens of thousands of men "in cities pent," and of pleasure rather than profit. In a secondary degree it is useful as a commercial highway, the barge traffic being really useful to the people on its banks, where coal, stone for road mending, wood, flour, and other heavy and necessary goods are delivered on the staithes almost at their doors. But when the old mills were first founded, and for eight centuries onwards, it was as a source of power, a substitute for steam, that the river was valued. The times will probably alter, and the Thames currents turn mill wheels again, to generate electric light for the towns and villages on its banks. The chance of this coming about is enough to make everyone who owns a mill right on the water keep it, even though not useful at present. First, the old roads, with auto-cars, then the old rivers with hydraulic lighting and low-power dynamos, will come to the front, or we are much



H. W. Taunt.

OLD HOLYWELL MILL.

Copyright

mistaken. Whereof take the old story of the Oxford river as full and sufficient witness, and Antony Wood for storyteller. "Oxford," he says, "owed its prosperity to its rivers," of which there were apparently as many branches and streams then as now.

The rivers were "beneficial to the inhabitants, as anon shall be showed," though the Cherwell was "more like a tide" than a common river sometimes, and once nearly overflowed all the physic garden. That garden stands there still, and has showed its beauties in the pages of COUNTRY LIFE. So does the Cherwell still behave "more like a tide than a river," and the scene at last year's torpid races, also produced in these pages, is evidence that the rivers have not diminished in volume. What then was the "great commodity" given by them to the city? First and least, a water which was good for dyeing cloth and for tanning leather; secondly, and by far the greatest benefit, it turned the wheels of at least a dozen important mills. As mills were always a monopoly, as much opposition was raised to the making of a new one as would now be evoked by the proposal to construct a new railway.

It was meddling with vested interests of a powerful kind; but there were so many rivers at Oxford that each turned one or two mills without injuring anyone's water rights.

Of all these mills, the greatest advantage to the city came from the Castle Mill. Notwithstanding its name, this was *not* the property of the Castle of Oxford, though it stood within arrow-shot of its towers, and was thus protected from pillage in time of war. It stands under the remaining tower, the water tower, of the castle still, and on exactly the same site, and on the branch of the Thames which from the most ancient days has been the waterway by which barges and merchandise came from the country to the city, bringing goods from Abingdon or corn and fuel from the upper river. And it is still called by its old name of the Weir Stream. "There is one river called Weyre, where hath bin an Hythe, at which place boatmen unload their vessels, which also maketh THAT ANTIENT MILL UNDER THE CASTLE seldom or never to faile from going, to the great convenience of the inhabitants." So says Antony Wood,

Henry VIII. gave the abbey's share to the new bishopric of Oxford, but the funds of the bishopric were embezzled by some means, and the town ultimately bought the mill for £566.

The picture of the Castle Mill, by Mr. Taunt, who is an indefatigable antiquary, both with book and camera, in all matters relating to the Thames Valley, shows not only the mill but St. George's Tower, the only remaining fragment of the castle. It is built of stones and mortar, so



H. W. Taunt.

THE KING'S MILL.

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compact that though the walls have stood since Robert d'Oily reared it, late in the reign of the Conqueror, the stones and mortar had to be cut out as if from a mass of rock when a water pipe was recently taken through the walls. It is now the water tower which holds the supply for Oxford prison.

OLD HOLYWELL MILL was on a branch of the Cherwell, and stood just behind Magdalen Walks, whence a charming view was had of its wheel and lasher. It belonged to the Abbey of Oseney, who gave it to Merton College in exchange for value. Now it is a handsome dwelling-house, below which the mill stream rushes.

Merton College seems to have had a fancy for owning mills, for it also acquired by exchange THE KING'S MILL. Only the house and lasher are left to show where this old mill stood. It had a narrow but very strong mill stream, which in winter used to come down in a sheet of solid water like green jade, a beautiful object among the walks and willows of Mesopotamia. It was an outpost of the King's forces when Oxford was held for the Royalists.

Botley Mill, though on the westernmost of the many streams into which the Thames divides at Oxford, was outside the walls. It dates from before the Conquest. Please note the typical Upper Thames scene here—the arrow-head leaves standing up where the eddy of the mill pool has piled up the gravel and made a shallow, the willow tree, the big oak behind it, and the miller and his young men looking out of the door and standing by the flour-cart. This belonged to the Abbey of Abingdon, in the chronicles of which are some records of an injury done to the "aqueduct," which is vulgarly called the "lake." This name is still the local term for all side streams

and artificial cuts from the Upper Thames. The men of a now vanished village of Seckworth broke the banks of the "lake" when Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, was being besieged in Rochester Castle. The lord of the manor was subsequently sued for this by the abbot of Abingdon, and had to pay 10s. damages. Doubtless the men of Seckworth had to contribute to pay for their indulgence in this mischief; but it looks as if the abbot's miller had been cheating them.

C. J. CORNISH.



H. W. Taunt.

ON BOTLEY STREAM.

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adding that it stood before the Norman conquest. After that it was forfeited to the Norman kings, and then held in half shares by the burgesses of the town and the abbots of Oseney, that once wealthy and now vanished abbey, which stood close by where the railway station now is. They shared the fishery also, and apparently this partnership prevented friction between the town and the monks, as each could undersell the other, and prices for flour and fish were kept down at a reasonable figure.



John Charity

A Romance of Yesterday

Containing certain adventures and love passages in Alta California of John Charity, yeoman of Cranberry Dreas in the County of Hampshire England as set down by himself

Edited by

Horace Amesley Vachell



CHAPTER XIV.

THE WAY OF A MAID WITH A MAN.

WE reached Sonoma on June 3rd. Vallejo hemmed and hawed when I enquired after the health of the señorita Estrada, and I was assigned a room in the house of his brother Salvador, which stands at the corner of the plaza, a poor lodging, neither clean nor comfortable. Later, Quijas told me, with a broad grin upon his red face, that he had encountered Tia Maria Luisa, and had learned from her that Magdalena was sick in bed of a fever. From the twinkle in the burly friar's eye one might infer that the fever was of the kind that in these latter days would be treated homœopathically to a successful issue—*similia similibus curantur*. I supped that night at Vallejo's table, and in the *sala* afterwards paid my court to the stout aunt.

"Ay, ay!" she exclaimed, holding up her fat little hands, "these fevers, Don Juan, are terrible things, terrible. *La pobrecita* was running about the *patio* not three hours ago, just before you came."

Her small eyes twinkled with malice and slyness.

"Señora," said I, capturing and kissing her left hand, "let me comfort you. These fevers come and go, as you say, like travellers. The señorita may be running about the *patio* again three hours after I have left."

She held up her fan to hide a smile.

"And when do you depart, señor?" she asked, softly.

"This instant," I replied, "if I believed honestly that my going would affect the health or happiness of your niece."

Tia Maria Luisa snatched away her hand, turned up her eyes, crossed herself, and muttered something that assuredly was not a benediction. Indeed, so obvious was it that she counted me an enemy to be held at arms' length that I made no further attempt to win her favour. Moreover, Vallejo's wife eyed me coldly. It has been said that her sympathies were with her kinsmen, the *abajenos*, and the part I had played in their capture was doubtless displeasing to this kind and gentle lady. Martina Castro was at her father's house, so practically I had no friend amongst the women whose services I could command at a pinch. None the less, fortune smiled on me, for that evening as I was crossing the plaza a pretty Indita slipped a billet into my hand.

"I am imprisoned" (she wrote) "in the small room in the north-east corner of the house. Do not attempt to see me. But be at the big sycamore below Salvador Vallejo's house to-night at ten."

The note required no answer, but as I slipped a piece of silver into the Indita's palm I asked how my dear fared. The graceful creature laughed coquettishly, and said that the señorita had eaten a sorry dinner. Her sparkling eyes assured me that an intrigue is meat and drink for maid and mistress.

At the appointed hour I sallied forth, wrapped in my mantle, with my sombrero pulled far over my eyes. 'Twas pitch dark, but I made my way to the sycamore and sat down on one of its big roots. And here I sat, cursing the delay, for nearly half-an-hour, till my eyes—for I was dog-tired—grew heavy as lead. Perhaps the lids fell, for I saw nothing, heard nothing, till a light touch upon my shoulder sped drowsiness. Then I dimly discerned the Indita standing beside me, veiled in a reboso. Bitterly disappointed, I spoke sharply: "You are late."

She murmured softly: "*No viene día que no tenga su tarde.*"

"Well, what message have you?"

"Are you awake, señor?"

"Yes, impudence."

"The sand is still in your eyes—no?"

She mocked me so that I tried to tweak her hair—twin braids that hung far below the waist. The girl ducked cleverly and laughed. Lo! 'twas the laugh of Magdalena.

"Querida," I exclaimed, opening my arms.

"Don Juan Charity, do not touch me. You are a caballero.

See, I forbid you to come nearer than *that*," and she stuck her sweet cheek some ten inches from my own. "*Ojala!* I have staked my reputation to come here, so—behave! And, besides, I am angry with you."

"Good Lord! what have I done? Thou dost chill me with thy frigid 'usted.'"

She had slipped aside the reboso, and I was able to see her face, which looked very pale and pensive by starlight.

"I heard of your doings at Santa Barbara. I am not your wife yet, señor, and I warn you that I am jealous. *Virgen Santísima!* How jealous I am! No, no, no. Back—or I leave you."

She was bewitching in the Indita's short skirt and camisole: and my heart was hungry for kisses, yet I dared not disobey. She continued:

"You are too kind, too cousinly, to the lovely señora Valence."

"She is my cousin."

"You say 'my' as if you owned her."

"Magdalena, don't be foolish. Think of the precious time we are wasting."

"You want to sleep again. *Dios!* You could not keep awake when I was coming to you."

"How didst thou escape from Tia Maria?"

"Ay! You are clever to change the subject. My Indita is lying in my bed with her face in the pillow. If my aunt should come in she will see nothing but two black braids. We removed the grating, Juanita and I, and then I slipped through the window. And all for love of a faithless Englishman."

And then she laughed that beguiling laugh of hers with the tears in it; pearls in a ripple of diamonds. And I knew intuitively that she had suffered, hearing idle tales of Letty and me. And, accordingly, I was so sorry for her that my voice trembled when I spoke.

"Believe me, Magdalena, I am true to thee; my heart is all thine. Oh! my dear, nothing came from thee to me save the trade wind that blew glad and strong from the north."

"Ah!" she murmured, "did not the sob of the sea tell thee that I was yearning for thee?"

Now that my eyes were used to the starlight I could see her plainly, and marked with a pang a thinner cheek, a slighter figure. She seemed rather shadow than substance; a creature of fancy, a sprite from the world unseen. And with my eyes gazing into the velvety depths of hers I told myself, with a sense of impending evil, that she was indeed of the past, a daughter of yesterday, whereas I, big, clumsy, ambitious, was the incarnation of to-day. And so thinking a tear trickled down my cheek, for my heart was twisted so cruelly that I gasped with the pain of it. And then Magdalena threw her arms about my neck and kissed me, entreating my pardon, and whispering a thousand endearments—words that do not lend themselves to our cold northern tongue, words that are as flames of fire.

The passion of it dismayed me. Compared with this love, the love of a maid such as Letty had been is as the flow of the silver Itchen to the arrowy rushes of the Rhone. And I was borne upon this swirling, seething tide as a log is whirled to the sea. And then, as a log is tossed upon a sand-bar, I suddenly found myself released from her clinging arms and stranded on a silt.

"Juanito," she murmured, timidly, "thou dost think me unmaidenly?"

"No," I replied, heavily. "No, 'tis not that, *querida*, but I would—I would—"

I stammered. She finished the phrase bitterly.

"Thou would'st have me different—no? Like the English daisy."

Her mouth drooped piteously. Her moods distracted me.

"Magdalena," said I, "leave the daisy alone, thou tigress. For thy sake, not for mine, I would that thy blood flowed more calmly. Fever and fret will undo thee."

She laid her head with a sigh upon my shoulder. Truly a man is humbled rather than exalted by such love as this, poured out in fullest measure. For unless he be fool or devil he must be sensible of his own unworthiness. And yet, if he strive to become worthy, it will be well with him; but if he accept such a gift in a vainglorious spirit, 'twere better for him and for the woman that they had never been born.

As she leaned trembling against me, I reflected that the way of a man with a maid is ever varying, a game played, so to speak, by misrule. And then I recalled Shakespeare's lines: "That which is the strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their variance." Had she loved me less our love passages might have proved smoother.

Presently we fell to talking of the future, and then her wit and foresight amazed me, for in Latin countries the women, as a rule, meddle not with what pertains to men. 'Twas plain that she held the claims of the rival factions in some contempt—a difference 'twixt tweedledum and tweedledee. Finally, as her head lay upon my shoulder, and her soft breath stirred the hair about my ear, she whispered: "Juanito, thou dost fear for me because my blood flows too quickly. I fear for thee, *querida*, because thou art easily fooled."

"Who is fooling me, Magdalena?"

"Thy handsome cousin for one, the señor Valencia."

She could read in my face that I thought her jealous of my friend.

"Ay, I am not jealous of him; but I do not like him. He is shallow, a trifier, and he imposes on thee; for that I hate him," and I heard her small teeth meet in a significant click. Nor would she listen to my defence of Courtenay, but interrupted me with gusts of light laughter; and when I persisted, growing warm, she laid her fingers on my mouth and entreated silence.

"How much dost thou love me, Juanito?"

I answered the question after a fashion that did not satisfy her.

"No, no; thy kisses are sweet. But tell me—would'st thou make a sacrifice for my sake?"

"What dost thou want?" I asked.

"Ay, how cold thy voice is! I want, I want—thee."

"But you have me, sweetheart."

"A part of thee, yes. But not all. Oh! Juanito mio, my heart tells me that Alvarado and his ambition will come, nay, has come between us."

I was silent.

"*Virgen Santisima*," she sighed, "it is so."

"Magdalena, I have no home to offer thee. I must work, dearest, as other men work, and thou must wait."

"There is no must about it," she retorted, pouting. From the corner of her eyes flashed a glance compounded of disdain, impatience, disappointment, and love. Oh! she was a witch, a witch. I began to build with words the castle wherein I hoped to lodge this fair enchantress.

"*Tate, tate*," she exclaimed, "how little thou dost understand me. By the time thou hast built such a cage as that the bird may be flown. No, no, not flown, but dead. Ay, how ambitious thou art! For me, I want but little to eat and drink and wear, but I must have love—plenty of it. But thou, like Alvarado, dost hold love to be a pastime. Fool, fool, not to know that it is all, all of life."

Was I impatient with her? Perhaps. I begged her to be more explicit, and at last she put her desire into words.

She entreated me, in fine, to leave her kind kinsman's service. I protested in vain. She was obstinate.

"Thou must choose between him and me."

I confess that the unreason of the choice angered me. It is true that she did not ask me to join the abajeños, but she beseeched me, with tender words and caresses, to play the part most abhorrent to a man of spirit—that of spectator when grave issues are at stake. I know now that her amazing instinct was not at fault. That she saw only too clearly that I was the tool of a politician, that she was thinking, sweet soul, not of herself but of me, and using a woman's lever with a woman's guile. But—God help me!—in my conceit I laid rude hands upon her intuitions.

"I would not tempt thee to dishonour. No, no. I do not ask thee to play the spy."

"A spy!" I interrupted, hotly.

"Ay, a spy, señor Innocence. For what other purpose, think you, were you sent here? For what other purpose are you here now? All is fair in war, yes; but this is not war; it is the petty quarrel of relations; and with such matters outsiders had better not meddle. Do not speak; I shall finish and—go. To a man is the present; to a woman belong the past and the future. And 'tis of the future I speak now. I have heard these matters discussed ever since I was a baby, the child of a house"—her voice sank—"of a house divided against itself. Divided, too, into four camps; some of my kinsmen are true Californians. Alvarado was once of them, a patriot, a born leader. Yes, I know that he failed, but he might have tried again. Then there are those who favour the powers that be, the Mexican rule—rotten to the core.

And then there are those, like Vallejo, who are looking eastward, plotting to deliver their country into the hands of the Americans, who will despoil them. And, lastly, there are those who are intriguing with England. Alvarado thinks that his secret has been kept. It has leaked from every lip—save perhaps yours, señor."

Her use of the "'usted" moved me more than the recital of facts already in my possession.

"And what will be the end of these intrigues? Ah, *quien sabe!* But I think that Alvarado will sacrifice everything and everybody to his ambition. And Vallejo will fare no better. And in the end we shall all be swept away."

She covered her face with her hands. I could say nothing, although I longed to comfort her. But when I touched her she sprang lightly aside, and her voice was cold and clear as the voice of a sibyl.

"Adios, Don Juan."

She ran nimbly from me, but I soon overtook her, and in my arms her anger melted. It is often so, and the man flatters himself that he has prevailed, because indeed the flesh is stronger than the spirit. Then I escorted her as far as the plaza, and from a discreet distance saw her reach the sanctuary of her room.

For an hour or more I paced up and down. The man who holds happiness in his grasp in the guise of such a maid, as Magdalena may well tremble with fear as well as with delight. In cooler mood I brought myself to believe that she had tempted me to dishonour, and the belief rankled. Also, the word "spy" was not to be exorcised. Gradually, however, I began to tread a gayer measure, and as my pace mended I left behind doubt and perplexity. Men run from such foes, leaving them with their women. Before I went to bed that night my mind was made up. I would play my own game to the end, play it off my own bat, asking counsel of none. I told myself that in such matters a man must be, so to speak, his own chronometer, telling himself the time o' day. With me it was high noon, and the shadows were hardly visible.

(To be continued.)



THE DOUBLE WHITE ROCKET.

THIS old garden flower seemed at one time almost lost, chiefly through a want of interest in beautiful hardy plants and not knowing that an annual or biennial transplanting in the spring was essential to success in its cultivation. The botanical name is *Hesperis matronalis alba plena*, and few flowers are more precious to group in the border, such as to form a line of silvery white near a walk or under the windows of the house. In the cool summer evenings the sweet fragrance is wafted into the rooms, and few flowers have a sweeter odour than the *Hesperis*. It is not an unduly vigorous plant, but is not weak, always giving when yearly transplanting is followed a wealth of its fragrant spikes from May onwards until the end of July, side spikes prolonging the display. If one has a row of the Rocket under the window it is necessary to merely lift the plants and replant in good soil. It is the lifting process that is essential to an abundant display of flowers every year. Those who have white Rockets in their gardens and are troubled about their ill-health will probably find that lifting them at once will restore their lost vigour. The double white variety is the most beautiful, but there are single Rockets which may be readily raised from seed, and give purplish colours as well as pure white. The writer has a profusion of Rockets fringing a shrubbery near the house, and in summer the atmosphere is filled with perfume. When planted in front of crimson Peonies in the border a rich effect is gained.

ANNUAL CLIMBERS FOR A QUICK EFFECT.

There are two annual climbers which may be used to cover pergolas, buildings, tree stems, or anything of a similar nature which are bare through perennial things not having yet covered them. The Canary Creeper (*Tropaeolum canariense*) and annual Japanese Hop will give the desired result, and throughout the summer a bower of fresh green foliage will be the reward. Sow the seed at once, and keep the seedlings well thinned out.

DAFFODILS AT SURBITON.

During the month of April the nurseries of Messrs. Barr and Sons are in their gayest dress, thousands of Daffodils fluttering in the winds which sweep across the land. Travellers by the main line from Waterloo can see these Daffodil acres, but, of course, one must be amongst them to enjoy the sea of colour and delicate fragrance distilled from the yellow cups. For many years Daffodils have been closely associated with the name of Barr, Mr. Peter Barr, who at an advanced age is now touring round the world, having through his enthusiasm got together many rare species and hybrids. To him more than to anyone else are we indebted for this glorious family represented by rare and familiar kinds in the broad acres at Surbiton. There one sees the noble Horsfieldi, Empress, Mme. de Graaff, and other trumpet Daffodils, the graceful Star or *Incomparabilis* section, and the little minimus and cyclamineus. A charming little flower is minimus, a trumpet Daffodil in miniature, and so strong and free that the wonder is that it is not more popular in gardens. Soon the whole May-flowering group will be open, and thus complete the cycle of the Narcissus in its many forms.

ROSEMARY.

A sweet name and sweet shrub is Rosemary. "That's for remembrance," but its poetic association and its presence in many an old English garden count for little in these days. We were reminded of its utility by a group upon a

sunny dry bank, where its warm fragrance distilled from leaf and flower scents the air, and recalls memories of the days when the border or plot of herbs was never forgotten. In warm, dry soil, such as one would find on a sunny bank, the Rosemary is hardy, and as a bush in the border, maybe one running by a wall or house, it possesses a distinct charm. We enjoy it, however, more fully in groups, and this applies to plants in general. To maintain the beauty of a group, young plants must be kept in stock to supply the place of failures, and this stock is readily obtained by striking cuttings in a handlight in summer.

SOWING GRASS SEEDS.

The month of April is the time to sow grass seeds, although sowings may be made practically at all seasons, save the dead of winter. But spring sowing is the more reliable, and it is needless to use as much seed as when sowing is postponed until the autumn. The soil must be thoroughly drained, as in cold heavy ground it is impossible to expect a healthy growth. If the soil is not in condition at this time, make it so as quickly as possible, and a little well-decayed manure will be helpful. The surface must naturally be perfectly even, and this work should be performed long before actual sowing takes place to get the soil into proper condition. Sow when the ground is neither wet nor dry, but a happy medium, and distribute the seed evenly. After this roll the ground and watch for weeds, which, unless eradicated as soon as seen, are a trouble afterwards. The seedlings will soon appear, and when about 2 in. in height roll again, only, however, when the soil is in condition.

ABIES BRACHYPHYLLA.

This tree is of great value for specimen planting, especially on light sandy soil. It is a Japanese Silver Fir of comparatively recent introduction, and there are consequently no large specimens to be found, but this will be remedied in the course of a few years if the present rate of progress continues. It was strongly recommended to the writer some years ago when a few specimen conifers were required, and a plant between 3 ft. and 4 ft. in height was purchased with other things. This is now very close on 30 ft. high, and is splendidly furnished throughout, the lower branches measuring nearly 20 ft. from tip to tip. *Abies polita* purchased and planted at the same time we can do nothing with; it refuses to grow.

SEED SOWING AND SEASONABLE NOTES.

The season is late, and at the time of writing cold, wet, and utterly unsuitable for seed sowing. But long before these words are in print the weather will have changed, and seeds must be sown as quickly as possible. As we have before pointed out, it is useless to expect any good results from thick sowing. Seedlings crowded together in the rows either choke themselves or produce weakly growth, which never bears those rich masses of flowers characteristic of annuals in full health. Those under glass must be kept in a light position to promote vigour, and keep a close watch for slugs and snails and woodlice. Much work has to be done in the garden at this time. Never allow the summer and sub-tropical plants to get weakly through want of light or too much heat. Sub-tropical plants grow so quickly that undue heat will promote a very fast growth. Keep bedding plants, such as Zonal Pelargoniums, clean, and give air on fine days. At this time insect pests become busy, and the only way to suppress them is by syringing with clean water at first, but if they are present in any numbers, a dose from the XL All

fumigator will clear them out. Finish Rose pruning, following the minute instructions we have laid down, transplant and plant hardy plants, and dress poor lawns with wood ashes and a little bone manure. (See recent notes upon lawn management at this time.) The greenhouse should be gay with forced bulbs. Hyacinths, Tulips, Daffodils, and similar things are very easy to force. It is interesting to grow hardy plants in pots for brightening the house before their flowers are open out of doors.

GROWING HARDY PLANTS IN POTS.

An interesting note appeared in the *Garden* recently from Mr. H. J. Elwes, Colesborne, Gloucestershire, about growing hardy plants in pots. Few men possess a wider knowledge of plants than Mr. Elwes, and his articles and notes are always worth attention. Many beautiful early flowers may be grown with great success in pots, and visitors to the Royal Gardens in the early year should always seek the hardy plant house, where the Scillas, Snowdrops, Chionodoxas, Anemones, Primulas, and other flowers are grown in pots; they are more interesting to the writer than the Cineraria, Chinese Primula, and usual things of the greenhouse. Mr. Elwes, in his note referred to, says: "It has always been a mystery to me why some amateur does not take up the cultivation of early-flowering hardy plants in pots, and show us what they are capable of doing. Year after year we see many of our choicest gems struggling against frost, snow, and torrents of rain, such as we are now experiencing, or icy blasts and parching drought such as we have suffered from in recent springs. As long as they do not actually die we let them fight it out with the elements, and in most years lose a great part, if not all, of their beauty. . . . I never knew the real beauty of *Anemone Pulsatilla*, an indigenous plant here, till I potted a good plant raised from seed. There must have been 150 flowers all out at once in a 10 in. pot, and far finer flowers than usual. *Saxifraga Stracheyi*, *S. ligulata*, *Primula denticulata*, and other Himalayan and Japanese plants, such as *Epimedium macranthum*, are far more interesting and beautiful ornaments for the house at this season than the everlasting round of Hyacinths, Tulips, Cinerarias, and Primulas, which too often fill the greater part of our greenhouses. *Corbularia alba*, *Tecophylaea cyanocrocus*, and many of the smaller and more delicate spring bulbs are also excellent pot plants when properly managed." We should much like to receive a note from any readers who have been successful with hardy plant culture in pots.

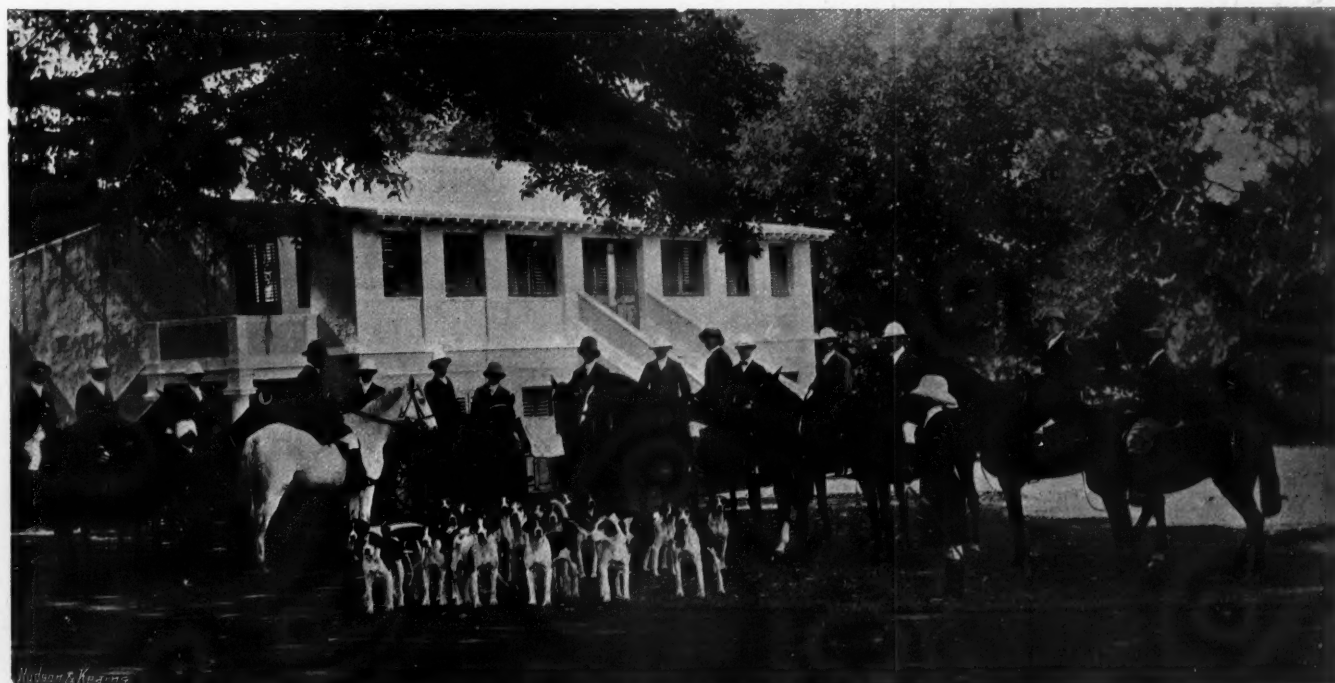
CATALOGUES RECEIVED.—Chrysanthemums: Norman Davis, Framfield, Sussex. Seeds and Plants: Cocker and Sons, Aberdeen. Bulbs and Plants: Max Leichtlin, Baden-Baden. Plants: V. N. Gauntlett and Co., Redruth; Otto Fröbel, Zürich. Pansies, Violas, and Roses: W. Sydenham, Tamworth. Flower and Vegetable Seeds: Thompson and Morgan, Ipswich. Seeds, Begonias, Chrysanthemums, etc.: T. S. Ware, Tottenham. Shrubs and Fruit Trees: S. S. Marshall, Barnham, Sussex. White's Patent Garden Syringes: Benton and Stone, Birmingham. Hardy Perennials, Alpines, etc.: Barr and Sons, King Street, Covent Garden.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are always pleased to assist our readers in matters of difficulty concerning the garden. We are also in touch with many first-class gardeners, and shall be happy to recommend one to any who may require the services of a reliable man.

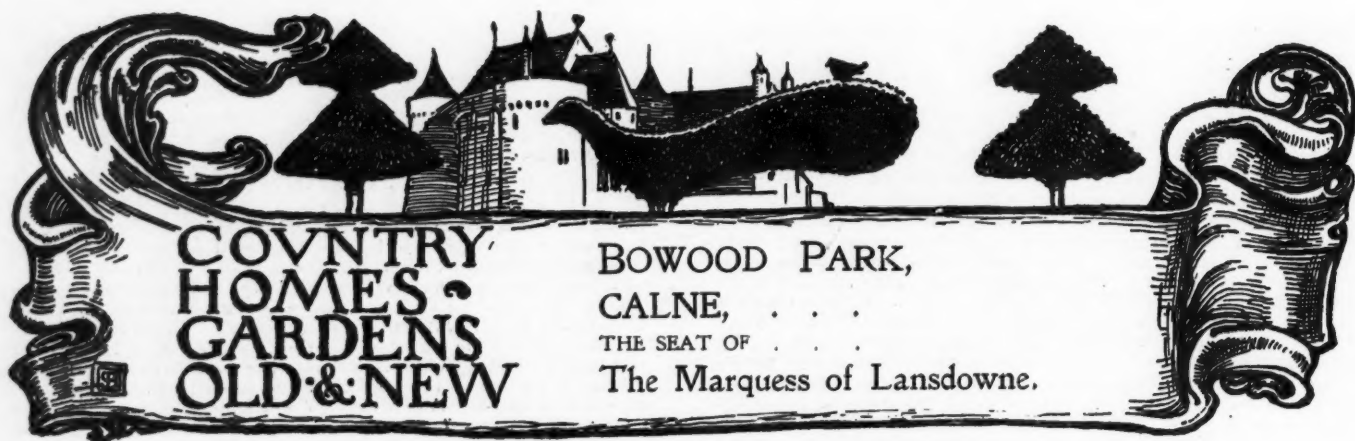
THE MADRAS HOUNDS.

THE Madras Hunt, which with its records of over fifty years is the oldest institution of the kind in India, has just finished a short but remarkably successful season. The season was short owing to the prevailing drought and consequent hardness of the ground (from frost the hunt has nothing to fear!), and its success may be gauged from the fact that the pack met thirty-one times and killed no less than thirty-five jackals, a "record" for an Indian pack, we should imagine,

and sufficient proof of the good quality of the hounds, which were only imported in October last. The duties of Master were performed by Captain England, R.A., with Mr. Stanley Clarke, R.A., as first whip, Mr. H. Beauchamp, who won the Hunt Point-to-Point on his big chestnut Waler, Cocoa, being hon. secretary. The accompanying photograph of the Hunt was taken outside the Royal Artillery officers' mess at St. Thomas's Mount.



READY TO START.



THE gracious and noble seat of Bowood, about two miles west of Calne and four miles south-east of Chippenham, is one of the most interesting in the whole county of Wilts. Nothing is wanting to the completeness of the place, which belongs to a great class of splendid mansions very dear to the lover of English country life. They are a domestic embodiment of the hereditary virtues and strength of the country, and associations with great and good people rarely

fail to gather about them. Thus they represent what is best in our organised society, and Bowood has merits of its own. It lies in a singularly beautiful and interesting country, and the house and garden alike claim attention, one being the complement of the other.

Anciently the estate formed part of the royal manor of Pewsham, and was rich in animals of the chase. It remained with the Crown, and it is said that James I. here sought the diversion of hunting. It was afterwards disafforested, and seized by the Parliament, and came into the possession of Sir Orlando Bridgeman, son of the Lord Keeper. It was then purchased by John, Earl of Shelburne, father of the first Marquess of Lansdowne. Local tradition is recorded to have said that, when the Parliamentary Commissioners visited the place and surveyed it, they wished to convey the game from the demesne across Lockhill Heath to Spye Park, which lies to the south-west. They were at a loss how to accomplish their object, but the Wiltshire clothiers came to their aid, and stretched out cloth upon posts, making an excellent drive for the deer, and thus they were safely removed.

The Earl of Shelburne built a large part of the mansion after the designs of the famous brothers Robert and James Adam, and the principal or south front dates from their time. It has a large octostyle portico of classic character freely treated in its details, and most distinctly imposing. The first Marquess of Lansdowne carried on the work, and added extensively on the west side. Here again the brothers Adam were called in, and they are said to have taken a wing of the Emperor Diocletian's palace at Spalato, in Dalmatia, as their model for the new structure, which has an extent of some 300ft., and includes the grand conservatory. The north front, which is not remarkable in character, contains the family apartments. The state rooms and some others are very imposing in their spacious and dignified aspect, and they are adorned with a noble collection of the best masters of the Italian, Dutch, Spanish, French, and English schools, and Salvator Rosa, Domenechino, Ludovico Caracci, P. Wouvermans, Rembrandt, Claude, Navarrete, Velasquez, Hogarth, Reynolds, and many more are represented.

The park and pleasure



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THE WATER TEMPLE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—BOWOOD: A GENERAL VIEW.

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grounds are spacious and splendid, and comprise much beautiful scenery, being richly wooded and greatly diversified. Indeed, the park derives much of its charm from its many undulations, and nine distinct valleys can be traced, which are traversed by delightful grass drives and walks. The principal entrance is from the direction of Chippenham, and is through an arched gateway, flanked by a tower designed by Barry, and the inner wall is adorned with two reliefs by M. L. Watson. As our pictures disclose, the garden architecture and sculpture are very rich and beautiful throughout. Before entering the park the visitor is charmed by the picturesque village of Derry Hill, opposite to the gilt gates, the modern half-timbered houses and the church being very picturesque in character and grouping. The drive to the house is about two miles in length, and is nearly everywhere amid glorious woods, with openings through which the Lansdowne column and a white horse cut on the slope of Cherhill Downs are seen, with many a fine prospect across the country. Another approach is from Calne, skirting the park. But by whichever way the visitor comes he is charmed with the character and variety of the place, and the noble trees—more especially the cedars of Lebanon and the oaks and cork trees—cannot fail to impress him.

The park and pleasure grounds were laid out by William, Marquess of Lansdowne, and it is particularly interesting to learn that he was assisted by that eminent and cultured lover of the garden, the Hon. Charles Hamilton, whose own place at Painshill in Surrey, which has been illustrated in these pages, holds such an important position in the history of landscape gardening. The park at Bowood is encircled by woods, and the noble lake, winding at the foot of the great sweep of lawn and embosomed in foliage, is a most attractive feature, with the classic temple by its side. The lake contains an island, with a heronry, making a very pretty object, and it terminates in a



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THE GRAND ENTRANCE.

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cascade which tumbles in an attractive scene over mossy stones. It is, perhaps, in the winding character of the lake and the nature of its surroundings that the chief affinity with Painshill may be found.

But nearer the house the gardens are appropriately formed, and the character of them is in full accord with the structure. The principal garden is on the south side in the angle between the main structure and the long additional conservatory wing which has been alluded to. It is most attractive, and its various terraces, with their choice architectural features and their grand stairways, are singularly beautiful. These terraces are, indeed, amongst the most notable of the many which surround some of England's noble houses, and we feel that the words of the authors of "The Formal Garden in England" are true in looking at Bowood. "The terrace is admitted, even by the landscapist, to be desirable near the house. In the first place, it presents to the eye a solid foundation for the house to start from, and gives the house



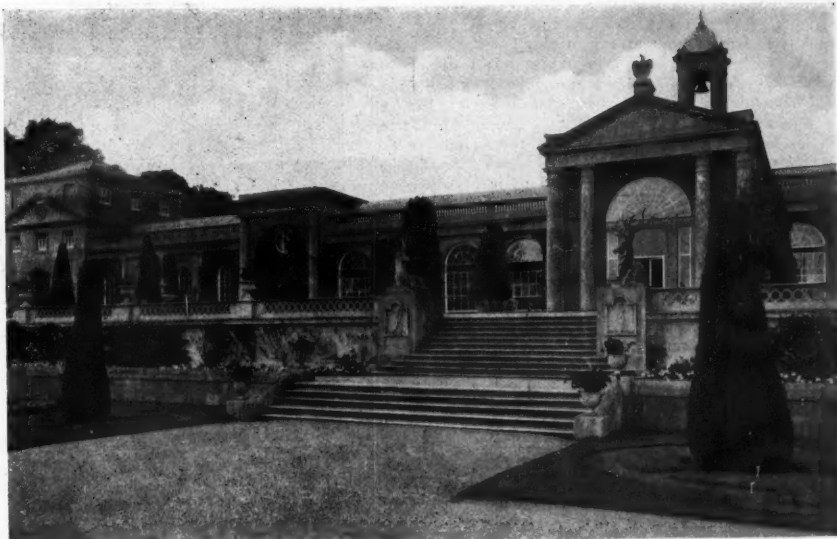
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THE FLOWER GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

itself greater importance by raising it above the level of the adjacent ground, and, again, it is healthier. There is something uncomfortable in the idea of a house placed flat on the ground or down in a hole. It need not necessarily be damp, but one always imagines that it will be, and that the timber will decay, and the plaster moulder, and rats run over the floor; but when the house starts from a terrace it at least looks dry, and the terrace enables you to see the garden." Moreover, at Bowood there is a lovely prospect from the upper terrace over the park and winding lake, with the umbrageous upland beyond and the heights of Roundway and Beacon Downs.

There are many charming features on this fine estate. The pleasure grounds are a simple delight, and are placed just behind the house. The flower garden is quite old-fashioned, with noble wide mixed borders, filled in summer with groups of handsome perennials, and backed with high walls, upon which fruit trees are successfully grown. This meeting of fruit and flower is very pleasant. One border is remarkably fine, with a simple edge, then lines of the silvery *Dactylis glomerata variegata*. The pleasure grounds comprise about sixty acres, and are adorned with interesting trees and shrubs and a pinetum, formed some sixty years ago. This is a very good conifer



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CENTRAL TERRACE STEPS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the growing youth of the country that this book is one which their parents will certainly do their best to keep out of their hands. It is not a wicked

book; in fact, it is as wholesome and manly a book as has been written for some time; but it is a seductive account of and a manual of instruction in the most ancient and fascinating of sports; and, after reading it, it is impossible not to feel that one would give a good deal to be a falconer in a small way, if not in a great. From this book it is fairly clear that any person of intelligence and patience could learn the whole art, and practise it from beginning to end. But it would also seem to be plainly manifest that the man or boy who devotes himself to hawking without the assistance of an experienced falconer (who is a very expensive kind of gentleman) must be prepared, as the advertisements say, "to devote his whole time to the business." Having read this book through from beginning to end, having studied with especial care the chapters on "Furniture and Fittings," and on "Eyesses and Hack Hawks" and their treatment, having taken to heart the lessons as to the management of passage-hawks, and the pages on "Training and Entering," I cannot for the life of me see how any ardent falconer ever has time for anything except his favourite pastime. For it is abundantly clear that the management of hawks involves the most terrible strain upon the patience of the falconer. Not less is the strain upon his philosophy. For even the best of falconers frequently lose the hawks over which they have expended so much trouble, sometimes because the fierce birds fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, at other times through the unkindly attentions of a neighbour's keeper. In these circumstances, and having regard to the fact that the rule "once a falconer always a falconer" is one which is not proved by exception, one would expect falconers as a body to be without learning or scholarship. But the fact is far otherwise. As the readers of COUNTRY LIFE have had many opportunities of seeing, modern falconers, or a great many of them, can write English



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THE FOUNTAIN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

soil, being light, and hence one is not surprised to find a noble example of *Abies grandis*, the *Sequoia sempervirens*, upwards of 70ft. high, the beautiful Atlantic cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*), junipers, cypresses of many kinds, the Chinese *Arbor-vita*, and the distinct *Biota orientalis pendula*; but it would weary our readers to make a mere list, although we cannot omit the beautiful evergreen oaks which assist in giving shelter to the pinetum.

Our space is exhausted, but much more might have been said of the beauties of Bowood. What we would particularly enforce is that the formal gardens are fully appropriate to the fine house, and that they lead the eye by the green slope to the superb landscape outspread in this chosen region of Wiltshire.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

YEARS ago there was a schoolmaster, far-seeing but narrow-minded, who made a point of discouraging parents from permitting their sons to learn music, on the ground that music was the ruin of a scholar. And no doubt he was right in a measure. Music soothes the savage breast, but it does not teach conic sections, or Latin verse, or modern languages, or any of those things which are essential to commercial success in life. Not quite seriously, indeed even laughingly, I am disposed to adopt the attitude of the schoolmaster and to warn the earnest parent not to permit the introduction of Mr. E. B. Michell's "Art and Practice of Hawking" (Methuen) into his happy family. At the same time, I shall probably be doing no disservice to either author or publisher by pointing out to



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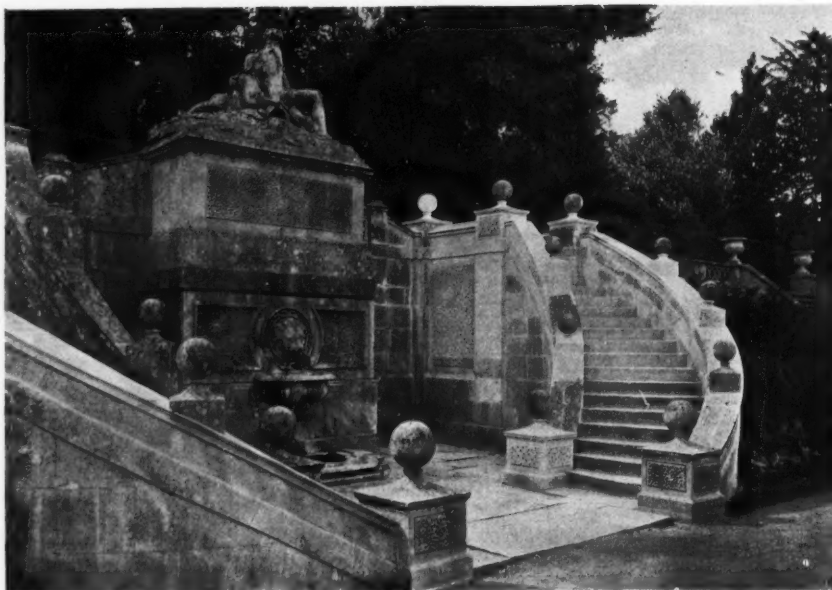
A FINE GROUP OF CEDARS.

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BOWOOD: A WATERFALL IN THE PARK WOODS.

"C.L."

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She was coming. I watched the slight figure from out of the dusk between the trees, and the darkness in which I had walked of late fell away. The wood that had been so gloomy was a place of sunlight and song; had red roses sprung up around me I had felt no wonder. She came softly and slowly, with bent head and hanging arms, not knowing that I was near. I went not to meet her—it was my fancy to have her come to me still—but when she raised her eyes and saw me I fell upon my knees.

For a moment she stood still, with her hands at her bosom; then, softly and slowly through the dusky wood, she came to me and touched me upon the shoulder. "Art come to take me home?" she asked. "I have wept and prayed and waited long, but now the spring is here and the woods are growing green."

I took her hands and bowed my head upon them. "I believed thee dead," I said. "I thought that thou hadst gone home, indeed, and I was left in the world alone. I can never tell thee how I love thee." "I need no telling," she answered. "I am glad that I did not so forget my womanhood as to come to Virginia on such an errand; glad that they did laugh at and insult me in the

meadow at Jamestown, for else thou might have given me no thought; very heartily glad that thou didst buy me with thy handful of tobacco. With all my heart I love thee, my knight, my lover, my lord and husband—"

Her voice broke, and I felt the trembling of her frame. "I love not thy tears upon my hands," she murmured. "I have wandered far, and am weary; wilt rise and put thine arm around me and lead me home?"

I stood up, and she came to my arms like a tired bird to its nest. I bent my head and kissed her upon the brow, the blue-veined eyelids, the perfect lips. "I love thee," I said. "The song is old, but it is sweet. See! I wear thy colour, my lady."

The hand that had touched the ribbon upon my arm stole upwards to my lips. "An old song, but a sweet one," she said. "I love thee. I will always love thee. My head may lie upon thy breast, but my heart lies at thy feet."

There was joy in the haunted wood, deep peace, quiet thankfulness, a springtime of the heart, not riotous like the May, but fair and grave and tender like the young world in the sunshine without the pines.

Our lips met again, and then, with my arm around her, we moved to the giant pine, beneath which stood the minister. He turned at our approach, and looked at us with a quiet and tender smile, though the water stood in his eyes. "Heaviness may endure for a night," he said, "but joy cometh in the morning. I thank God for you both."

"Last summer, in the green meadow, we knelt before you while you blessed us, Jeremy," I answered. "Bless us now again, true friend and man of God."

He laid his hands upon our bowed heads and blessed us, and then we three moved through the dismal wood, and beside the sluggish stream down to the great bright river. Ere we reached it, the pines had fallen away, the haunted wood was behind us, our steps were set through a fairy world of greening bough and springing bloom. The blue sky laughed above, the late sunshine burred our path with gold. When we came to the river it lay in silver at our feet, making low music amongst its reeds.

Am I wrong? Is this passage, which I have read with so much delight, in the least degree overstrained? If so, then surely it is choiceworthy to be wrong, for to me the pleasure of reading such a description of a heart moved to true love at last is an unmixed and surely an innocent enjoyment.

COUNTRY GOSSIPS.—V.

I HAVE lately suffered some sad, but I hope salutary, humiliation. Here, or at no great distance from us, we are a pastoral people, much busied with the raising of sheep. There EVERY SHEPHERD HAS HIS DOG. It may be but a fancy of mine, but it appears to me as if always, when a man and a dog have much in common, there is an expansion of the intelligences and sympathies of both. The human and the canine go out to meet each other, to the advantage of either. To use an Irish way of putting it, it seems as if the affection and co-operation of the dog had a "humanising" influence on the man. However, that has nothing to do with my humiliation, and if anyone wishes to follow out this train of suggestion he may best do so, so far as I know, by reading and rereading the pages of "Owd Bob"—a wonderful dog book, with a deal that is human in it too, as a good dog book is bound to have.

So amidst this people of sheep and of dogs I had bought myself a new dog—taken him without a character—by head mark alone. And I was not mistaken in his character. "The good Lord," as one of my country gossips is fond of saying, "the good Lord, He do put His mark on His handiwork." You get nice sayings like this, now and again, among our gossips. And in a minor degree it is as true, a saying of a dog as of a man. This dog of my purchasing had the right head mark, the kind and intelligent expression, and there was no deceit in him. But he had the deadly sin—he was a sheep-runner. Not only one of those who run to see the foolish sheep run, but of those who have a passion to bury their fangs in the wool till they meet in the flesh. For these, after years of discretion, there is but one cure—the grave. So I went to see my friend on whose flock the dog had shown his evil propensity. I went with some misgiving, not knowing what I should say to the man, feeling that abuse was my fair portion, and wondering in what degree it was right to accept it—to combine apology with dignity.

"I be terrible sorry," said the man, "as this should ha' happened."

"I cannot tell you," I said, "how sorry I am. You must tell me exactly what damage has been done, not sparing me anything, and of course I will make it good."

I was not humiliated yet, for I did not understand the man. The knock-down blow of humiliation came with his next sentence:

"Oh! no, no, sir," he said, "I don't want nothing of that kind. What's done's done. But what I'm sorry about is the

dog. It's a hard matter when a dog's come to up of twelve months old, or there, to break him of it, once he's took to it, and so it is."

There was much more to the same effect, but that was the keynote of all that this man would say, and all that he thought on the matter. He was anything but a rich man, of his class, too. Shillings were sums of which every copper counted with him. And yet, here he was thinking not at all of the few shillingworth of damage (after all it was nothing very serious that had occurred, for the marauder was beaten off at once), but of my trouble about the dog, and the dog's fate, that everything told him was inevitable. There was not a touch of atrabilious or even most natural irritation that my dog should have broken fence and run his sheep—just at lambing-time, too. The entire attitude of his mind was unselfish. He appeared able to look at the matter only from one point of view, not his, but mine. And that is why I am humiliated; for I believe this man behaved like



Dr. Featherley.

EVERY SHEPHERD HAS HIS DOG.

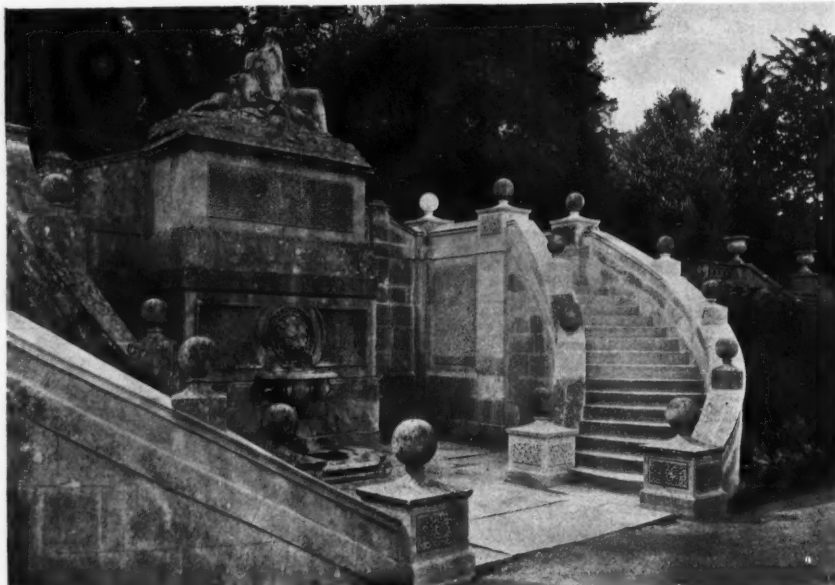
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a gentleman more completely than any man that I have the honour to know in my own class of life. I freely confess that he was far more of a gentleman than I could hope to have been in like circumstances. It was, I think, the most chivalrous and altogether magnificent way—according to Aristotle's description of the "magnificent man"—of meeting the case that is to be conceived. It is altogether beyond my own conception of the possibilities of human nature before this man proved them to me.

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Boer, and Percy, who is a veritable D'Artagnan, for Mistress Percy, as, by the law of the colony, she now is; and through it all the proud gentlewoman's love for the rough planter grows. In the course of that struggle there are duels, attempts by Carnal to have Percy assassinated, shipwrecks, piracy on the high seas, and an Indian rising. The whole is told with remarkable skill, and it is strange indeed that a lady should be able to describe with so much of living vigour some of the more violent scenes, and particularly the duel on the island. I could wish to give one or two passages to illustrate my meaning, but to do so would involve the sacrifice of one of great beauty of feeling, which it is particularly desirable to give, with a view to show that the book is not all composed of fierce adventure, and that the author can depict tender feeling and true passion in moving and powerful words. The situation in which the following passage occurs is that there has been an Indian rising, that Jocelyn has disappeared, and that Percy goes out into the woods in desperate sorrow, believing her to have fallen into the hands of the Indians, and worse. He learns from a faithful friend that she is saved. He goes alone into the wood to meet her, and then comes this beautiful scene:

She was coming. I watched the slight figure from out of the dusk between the trees, and the darkness in which I had walked of late fell away. The wood that had been so gloomy was a place of sunlight and song; had red roses sprung up around me I had felt no wonder. She came softly and slowly, with bent head and hanging arms, not knowing that I was near. I went not to meet her—it was my fancy to have her come to me still—but when she raised her eyes and saw me I fell upon my knees.

For a moment she stood still, with her hands at her bosom; then, softly and slowly through the dusky wood, she came to me and touched me upon the shoulder. "Art come to take me home?" she asked. "I have wept and prayed and waited long, but now the spring is here and the woods are growing green."

I took her hands and bowed my head upon them. "I believed thee dead," I said. "I thought that thou hadst gone home, indeed, and I was left in the world alone. I can never tell thee how I love thee." "I need no telling," she answered. "I am glad that I did not so forget my womanhood as to come to Virginia on such an errand; glad that they did laugh at and insult me in the

meadow at Jamestown, for else thou might have given me no thought; very heartily glad that thou didst buy me with thy handful of tobacco. With all my heart I love thee, my knight, my lover, my lord and husband——" Her voice broke, and I felt the trembling of her frame. "I love not thy tears upon my hands," she murmured. "I have wandered far, and am weary; wilt rise and put thine arm around me and lead me home?"

I stood up, and she came to my arms like a tired bird to its nest. I bent my head and kissed her upon the brow, the blue-veined eyelids, the perfect lips. "I love thee," I said. "The song is old, but it is sweet. See! I wear thy colour, my lady."

The hand that had touched the ribbon upon my arm stole upwards to my lips. "An old song, but a sweet one," she said. "I love thee. I will always love thee. My head may lie upon thy breast, but my heart lies at thy feet."

There was joy in the haunted wood, deep peace, quiet thankfulness, a springtime of the heart, not riotous like the May, but fair and grave and tender like the young world in the sunshine without the pines.

Our lips met again, and then, with my arm around her, we moved to the giant pine, beneath which stood the minister. He turned at our approach, and looked at us with a quiet and tender smile, though the water stood in his eyes. "Heavenness may endure for a night," he said, "but joy cometh in the morning. I thank God for you both."

"Last summer, in the green meadow, we knelt before you while you blessed us, Jeremy," I answered. "Bless us now again, true friend and man of God."

He laid his hands upon our bowed heads and blessed us, and then we three moved through the dismal wood, and beside the sluggish stream down to the great bright river. Ere we reached it, the pines had fallen away, the haunted wood was behind us, our steps were set through a fairy world of greening bough and springing bloom. The blue sky laughed above, the late sunshine burred our path with gold. When we came to the river it lay in silver at our feet, making low music amongst its reeds.

Am I wrong? Is this passage, which I have read with so much delight, in the least degree overstrained? If so, then surely it is choiceworthy to be wrong, for to me the pleasure of reading such a description of a heart moved to true love at last is an unmingled and surely an innocent enjoyment.

COUNTRY GOSSIPS.—V.

I HAVE lately suffered some sad, but I hope salutary, humiliation. Here, or at no great distance from us, we are a pastoral people, much busied with the raising of sheep. There EVERY SHEPHERD HAS HIS DOG. It may be but a fancy of mine, but it appears to me as if always, when a man and a dog have much in common, there is an expansion of the intelligences and sympathies of both. The human and the canine go out to meet each other, to the advantage of either. To use an Irish way of putting it, it seems as if the affection and co-operation of the dog had a "humanising" influence on the man. However, that has nothing to do with my humiliation, and if anyone wishes to follow out this train of suggestion he may best do so, so far as I know, by reading and rereading the pages of "Owd Bob"—a wonderful dog book, with a deal that is human in it too, as a good dog book is bound to have.

So amidst this people of sheep and of dogs I had bought myself a new dog—taken him without a character—by head mark alone. And I was not mistaken in his character. "The good Lord," as one of my country gossips is fond of saying, "the good Lord, He do put His mark on His handiwork." You get nice sayings like this, now and again, among our gossips. And in a minor degree it is as true, a saying of a dog as of a man. This dog of my purchasing had the right head mark, the kind and intelligent expression, and there was no deceit in him. But he had the deadly sin—he was a sheep-runner. Not only one of those who run to see the foolish sheep run, but of those who have a passion to bury their fangs in the wool till they meet in the flesh. For these, after years of discretion, there is but one cure—the grave. So I went to see my friend on whose flock the dog had shown his evil propensity. I went with some misgiving, not knowing what I should say to the man, feeling that abuse was my fair portion, and wondering in what degree it was right to accept it—to combine apology with dignity.

"I be terrible sorry," said the man, "as this should ha' happened."

"I cannot tell you," I said, "how sorry I am. You must tell me exactly what damage has been done, not sparing me anything, and of course I will make it good."

I was not humiliated yet, for I did not understand the man. The knock-down blow of humiliation came with his next sentence:

"Oh! no, no, sir," he said, "I don't want nothing of that kind. What's done's done. But what I'm sorry about is the

dog. It's a hard matter when a dog's come to up of twelve months old, or there, to break him of it, once he's took to it, and so it is."

There was much more to the same effect, but that was the keynote of all that this man would say, and all that he thought on the matter. He was anything but a rich man, of his class, too. Shillings were sums of which every copper counted with him. And yet, here he was thinking not at all of the few shillingworth of damage (after all it was nothing very serious that had occurred, for the marauder was beaten off at once), but of my trouble about the dog, and the dog's fate, that everything told him was inevitable. There was not a touch of atrabilious or even most natural irritation that my dog should have broken fence and run his sheep—just at lambing-time, too. The entire attitude of his mind was unselfish. He appeared able to look at the matter only from one point of view, not his, but mine. And that is why I am humiliated; for I believe this man behaved like



Dr. Featherley.

EVERY SHEPHERD HAS HIS DOG.

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a gentleman more completely than any man that I have the honour to know in my own class of life. I freely confess that he was far more of a gentleman than I could hope to have been in like circumstances. It was, I think, the most chivalrous and altogether magnificent way—according to Aristotle's description of the "magnificent man"—of meeting the case that is to be conceived. It is altogether beyond my own conception of the possibilities of human nature before this man proved them to me.

That is the meaning of my humiliation, out of which I hope to get some lasting profit.

One of these gentle shepherds of our downs is a fellow of the most prodigious power of lungs, a veritable Boanerges. It is a quality useful in his calling; in his calling in a double sense, calling to his dog on the hillside on a stormy day. Of this man it is told that in his loyal enthusiasm on hearing of the capture



C. Reid.

A BLIND MAN'S DOG.

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of Cronje he burst into singing "God Save the Queen" in his house with such extraordinary effect, in the circumscribed space, that, as one of his friends narrated it to me, "His daughter set in to sneeze then and there, with the tickling of the noise in her nose, and so went on, and they couldn't stop her nohow. She sneezed and went on sneezing for twenty-four hour or more without stopping, and you could hear her all over the Down side. 'Twas something shameful."

A hard word "shameful" at first blush, but not so meant, I take it. Pitiful was the sense in which it was intended, I doubt not; and pitiful it really was, for the poor girl suffered not a little by this fearful attack of what our little



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

"SAY PLEASE."

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F. Otto. THE EXPOUNDER OF THE CAMPAIGN Copyright

doctor calls "sternutation." He makes up for lack of height by long words; but I rather doubt whether the singing of her Boanerges parent was really the stimulus, though it may well have set dancing all the germs and microbes in the room.

Our folk are taking immense interest in the war news, and I generally find one or two gathered around THE EXPOUNDER OF THE CAMPAIGN about the time that the papers come in. "I do hope as they'll crunch up that there Crunchy nice and soon," one of the old ladies said to me, as soon as Roberts was heard to have him trapped in the Modder's bed. They do not seem to understand our magnanimity to the vanquished. Their notions of war are in the primitive stage, the Geneva Convention unrecognised by them. "I suppose," said another dear old gentle, kindly Christian dame, "I suppose so soon as they get hold of this here old Kruger"—they like to pronounce the "g" soft, like a "j"—"they'll just put him up against a wall and shoot him." No doubt these are methods that would simplify many things.

I have been singularly unlucky of late with my canine ventures. An old friend in a neighbouring town, a blind man, lost his dog, on which he was almost wholly dependent. And by way of doing him a kindness I got A BLIND MAN'S DOG, and presented it him. He was duly grateful; but the dog did not turn out an unqualified success. It soon grew attached to him, and led him carefully, but its attachment was such that it flew with fury at any

would-be almsgiver that attempted to approach him and his recipient tin can. And since he had no other source of livelihood the dog erred distinctly on the side of excess of zeal.

"We're poor creeturs," was the comment of the old lady who wants to shoot Mr. Kruger against a wall, when I told her this story about the blind man's dog, "we're poor creeturs all of us, but the good Lord made us, so we must be thankful," curious mixture of critical estimate and pious gratitude that may have referred equally to the imperfections of myself as a charitable agent, to the dog, or to the blind man. The lesson of

humiliation that I received as a consequence of my new dog's evil ways with the sheep has turned this gossip much on canine lines. I may conclude it with a picture of a wholly successful and satisfactory dog being taught to "SAY 'PLEASE,'" a picture that was given me by one of the most ingenious of my neighbours. He is not of this country, but comes out of the West, and his phrase, as he gave me the photograph, pleased me not a little: "Don't 'ee reckon 'tis a cunning little picture then, sure enough?"

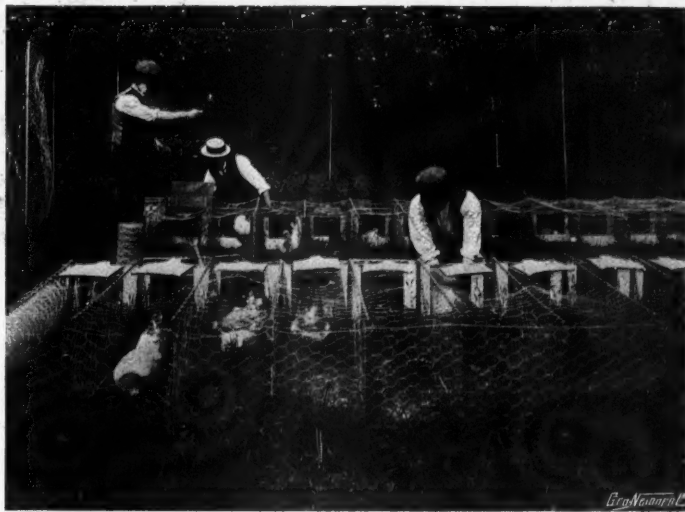
I "reckon 'tis."

PHEASANT FARMING IN HAMPSHIRE.

HAMPSHIRE as a sporting county has probably the most venerable history of any in England, for it was there, at a convenient distance from his capital, that Norman William established the New Forest, in which his son Rufus met death to the general joy of his subjects. It is growing again in fame now in so much that even Norfolk and Suffolk must look to their laurels. Great bags were made during the past season on the estates of Lord Ashburton and Lord Carnarvon, and three years ago the record bag for partridges in this country was killed on the Grange Estate of the former.

With the increasing interest taken in game preservation in the country it is natural that there should spring into existence some of those game farms which it is the set purpose of COUNTRY LIFE to support, and that for many reasons. In the first place they tend to improve the quality of the shooting, for, say what one will about the good old days, there is no doubt in life that the more birds there are on a shoot the merrier is it for the men who hold the guns. Secondly, they tend to discourage that curse to all sportsmen, the illicit trade in pheasants' eggs; and thirdly, they provide an agreeable and on occasion a profitable occupation for gentlemen of sporting tastes who might otherwise be at a loose end. The work of superintendence and management is not only interesting, it is also work which a gentleman can do emphatically better than a hireling; and Hampshire, with its beautiful air, its chalk soil, and its numerous ups and downs, is admirably suited for the business.

Three miles south of Winchester, and not very far from the pleasant village of Twyford, which lies on the left bank of the Itchen, is Morestead; and at Morestead Mr. R. Eden Richardson carries on a game farm on a very large scale. Himself one of the most thorough sportsmen whom South Wales, nursing mother of hard riders and keen shots, ever produced, he has married a daughter of the eminently sporting house of Long, and he has settled down at Morestead to see and to show what can be done in the way of game farming with skill and care and with the advantages of the best appliances, ample space, and a healthy situation. Three thousand birds he has in his pens at this moment, all in the very pink of health, and no less than 350 acres of land are devoted to their use. Our forefathers would probably have regarded this as a shocking waste; but we are educated out of that sort of fallacy now, and the world has learned to recognise that there is land which will pay better as a game nursery than in any other way, and that the annual crop of pheasants forms a valuable part of



FOSTER MOTHERS.

pheasants run year after year on the same ground, or from confining the laying stock in the same permanent pens. Tuberculosis, once present, is by no means easy to expel. The old birds may die or be killed off, but the deadly tubercle has infected the embryo in the egg, and although they may hatch out well enough, the mortality among the chicks, and even among the nearly grown birds, becomes very great. Constant change of ground is the one real preventive, and that is supplied by Mr. Eden Richardson by a variety of ingenious devices. Firstly, as we have seen, he has plenty of space to play with. Next, the construction of his pens is such that they can be moved with ease without handling or flustering the birds, and that the eggs can be collected without disturbance. Each pen contains six hens to a cock, and the dimensions are 40ft. long, 6ft. wide, and 2ft. high, and the netting at the top is slack, so that the birds can run and rise enough to learn the

use of their wings without injuring themselves in any way, and cutting and tying of wings become unnecessary. Twice a week these pens are moved on to completely fresh ground, where the birds have every opportunity of picking up for themselves the fresh insect food which, to the pheasant as to the partridge, is more helpful than any amount of artificial food. A good ant year, said the lamented author of "The Gamekeeper at Home," is always a good partridge year, and there is no doubt that both partridges and pheasants will not thrive without plenty of insect food.

Let us attempt now to follow Mr. Eden Richardson's proceedings literally *ab ovo*, or even from a little before. He is not content, as others are, to pen his birds together anyhow, but he gives care to strains and races. The Chinese ring-necked, the black-necked, the versicolors, and Reeves and other fancy breeds each have their separate region, and there are some hybrids, reared for purely sporting purposes,



A BUSY MORNING.

which are of somewhat larger size than the ordinary birds. But Mr. Eden Richardson has discovered that the breeding of hybrids is not altogether desirable, for the offspring, even of a cross between a Reeves pheasant and *Phasianus colchicus*, are mules which cannot produce fertile eggs, either when mated with one another or with the parent stock. From each of the hens so penned, race by race, thirty-five eggs as a rule are collected before the end of May, or about twice as many as they would lay in a state of Nature. These are placed either under domestic hens—in our own experience Dorkings are far the best—or under bronze Turkey hens, which sit well, covering fifty or sixty eggs, and make good mothers for half as many chickens. The sitting-boxes and coops for the poults in the field are specially designed by Mr. Richardson, and are shown in the illustrations. He would no doubt give full particulars on application.

Now for the all-important matter of diet. The stock birds are fed in much the same way as poultry, that is to say when poultry are properly fed, which is only too rare. They receive in the morning, when their crops are empty and their stomachs hungry, meal which is comforting and readily assimilated. In the evening they have hard corn, and it may be mentioned at this point that all the grain consumed on the farm is home grown, and from that "pedigree" seed of which farmers are beginning to appreciate the value. For the chicks, they begin the day with aromatic meal, carefully prepared from Mr. Richardson's own recipe, and they go on to crissel, ground greaves, biscuit meal, fine or coarse, cracked maize, barley, wheat and oatmeal, with a little extra spice if the weather be wet or cold. No doubt Mr. Richardson follows the golden rule for the feeding of young pheasants: Feed little at a time, but often, and begin very early, and see that none is left to get sour. If insect life is scanty, and perhaps in any event, chopped custards made from the eggs of the common fowl are administered.

Such is the method pursued on the Morestead pheasant farm, and a very pleasant sight are these 3,000 brilliant and healthy birds engaged in producing, through man's instrumentality and guidance, at least twice as much food, to say nothing of sport, as they would have produced under the most favourable circumstances if left to themselves. Moreover, we are authorised to state that, given due notice so that all may be in readiness, Mr. Richardson will gladly show his farm to those who are interested. And a day may easily be spent less profitably and enjoyably than in running down to Winchester, and, after half-

Preservers of game believed that, the number of birds they could breed being only limited by the supply of eggs, partridges could be obtained and kept upon their estates as closely packed as pheasants in their coverts. They were mistaken. There must be a great demand for partridges' eggs again now, or the stealing of them would not have reached the proportions it has. It may be doubted whether the suppression of the supply is as direct a means of dealing with the evil as the lessening of the demand. All of the present generation do not, perhaps, know that their fathers made a similar attempt at partridge preservation



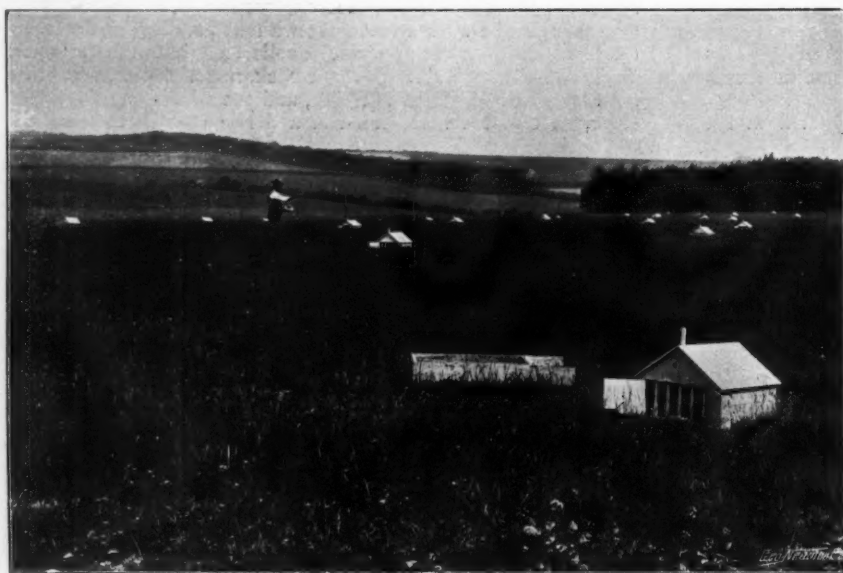
SOME OF THE PENS.

or unnatural means, and failed miserably. If they knew, perhaps the demand for eggs would decrease, and, if that is so, then the sporting Press can prove the best gamekeeper. There is only one way in which the purchase of partridges' eggs can be made to improve the stock of a manor. It is by adding a few eggs to every nest found, for a partridge can, as a rule, cover half-a-dozen more eggs than she lays. This method also assists the crossing of strains, but the latter can be as well and more honestly done by an exchange of eggs.

The hand-rearing of partridges under hens is a failure from a shooter's point of view. The reason of this is that the birds, having no jealous parents to keep them separate from other coveys, join together in big packs, so that within the limit of an average estate it does not matter how far the coops are apart, for in the end the result will be large packs of birds before the shooting season. The game-driving fraternity, who know what a big pack of grouse means, will doubtless not object to the thought of a big pack of partridges; but, nevertheless, herein lies all the trouble. Unlike grouse, which, however much shot at and driven off their own ground in the morning, usually return to tea, the tame-bred partridges have no such instinct, and if they fly off in a large pack they are very likely to remain away. Indeed, they sometimes go for miles, and apparently lose themselves, so that they could not return if they would. It may be that the big pack will be successfully broken up and heavy toll taken of them on the first day they are fired at. But this is the exception, and when it does occur, and the birds have collected again, it is probable that the first time they are flushed they will go clean out of the district. But it very often happens that tame-bred birds leave their home estate, unless it is a very large one, before September comes, and in any case they will not remain in the neighbourhood of the particular fields on which they were reared, as wild-bred ones do. At the time referred to nearly all the great preservers tried hand-reared partridges; now, on the contrary, not any of them do so. In Oxfordshire, Lord Ducie reared extensively; at Elvedon, near Thetford, in Norfolk, the Maharajah Duleep Singh did so to a large extent. There must be some good reason for the fact that on the great partridge manors the practice has died out, and it is well to ask those who rely upon purchased eggs to make themselves acquainted with the reason. Lord Ashburton, who holds the record, does not hand-rear, neither does Mr. Arthur Blyth, who for the two past years has made the record day's bag for each season. Perhaps the publication of evidence of this kind, so much against partridge rearing by hand, will help to check the abuse of traffic in partridges' eggs.

Nor is it only large packs of partridges that will infringe the laws of hospitality and depart without saying good-bye. On one occasion a gamekeeper in the employment of the writer discovered a nest of French partridge eggs in a locality strange to them. The uncommon eggs were, of course, put under a hen, and hatched out well. Although strangers to the district, and in the care of a keeper who knew nothing of the species, they were no trouble to rear with the pheasants, and showed a vigour in pedestrianism that astonished a pheasant of the same age. A pheasant or a grey partridge can run, too, but it is in a different way. They crouch and run; the hand-reared red-leg, on the contrary, stands bolt upright in a way that would please a drill-sergeant, and gets over the ground in a manner that would surprise a spaniel, to say nothing of a pointer or setter roading out the trail. These birds left the coop and their penned-up foster-mother some time before September, and I found them by their manner of running later in the season, and hid behind a hedge while they were driven over me. A double shot resulted in two birds, but the rest were never seen up to that 5,000 acre estate again, and, as far as could be gathered, no one else in that part of the country saw them afterwards. Those birds reared by their own partridge parents are not to be driven from home except by stress of weather and shortness of food.

On another occasion the writer had about 200 grey birds reared from eggs cut out by the mowing machines. It looked impossible ever to make these birds wild. Twenty or thirty at a time would fly up on to their feeder and there remain, covering his shoulders, hat, and arms, and even his boots, as he walked



FEEDING-TIME.

an-hour spent in the Cathedral or in the College, driving along the Bishop's Waltham Road, through Chilcombe, to Morestead.

HAND-REARED PARTRIDGES.

IN an article that recently appeared elsewhere, the practice of buying partridges' eggs was severely censured. It was stated quite rightly that the stealing of eggs had reached grave proportions, and that several societies were doing good work, by combination, for the purpose of putting a stop to the evil.

From 1865 to 1875 the hand rearing of partridges was at its height.

about, and the only trouble was to avoid stepping on any of the others. The nature of young partridges, hand reared, is absolute confidence, very different to that of the timid pheasant. Nothing can be more beautiful than to see covey after covey rise from the standing corn and fly straight for their feeder at the sound of his whistle; but that is all. Soon they cease to regard the foster-parent, and leave the food untouched, and then they begin to get together, as those referred to did. But it may be well to follow the history of those 200 for the benefit of egg purchasers. It happened, then, that when September arrived they had left the estate; they had not gone far—perhaps that was the most provoking part of it. There was a bit of late-standing barley on the other side of the boundary fence, and, coming right up to it, in this were the tame birds.

Luckily the shooting belonged to the farmer, but unluckily the latter was a shooting man. He was, however, a poor farmer but a good bargainer, and refused £10 for the shooting of that barley patch, although he took £20 for the shooting of the whole farm lying to the north of the village in which he lived, perhaps 60 acres. September 1st found the writer looking for the tame birds with the help of a setter, and they were immediately discovered; they rose in a sort of string, higher at one end, like a flock of wild geese seen rising from a distance, and extended the whole length of the field. A brace possibly rewarded speculation and perseverance, but it is too many years ago to be sure. The birds returned to their breeding ground, where they were immediately followed, in the hope of again driving them into the standing barley. On rising, much out of shot, they took exactly the line required, but went far away over the barley and took up their quarters on that portion of the farm not included in the £20 bargain, on the other side of the village, having flown right over it on to ground strange to them. Then the question arose whether to try to make another bargain for the rest of the farm or to wait until next day and see if they returned. The latter course was adopted, but they did not return. Then it was decided to try to take the rest of the farm, but on condition the birds could be found upon it. This time they were thought to be in beans, some of which were still uncut, and so it proved, for they rose from all parts of the field, but instead of going towards the village, the other side of which was the standing barley, they turned off at right angles with it, and when last seen were over the middle of a big estate, belonging to a shooting neighbour, and were still going.

That was the last time the writer saw them, and he never even heard of them again. This is not by any means an unusual experience; in fact, so many cases of the kind occurred that partridge rearing by hand died a natural death.

The foregoing instances show how birds may be lost. The following proves that it is not because they are sharper than wild-bred ones that they go away in such headlong designless flight. It was in one of those very bad years in which it is questionable policy to shoot your old birds because there are no young ones to supply their places. The bag on the first day of the season contained seven old birds and three young ones. Nevertheless, about the middle of September, upon entering a large turnip-field, a brace of setters instantly began to draw, with their heads at that height which indicates a large number of birds at a considerable distance. They established a double point at the same instant, on the same scent apparently, but 100yds. apart, on the right and left of the shooters, who were walking directly into the wind. Each shooter walked up to a dog; the man on the left, being a stranger to the setter, did not succeed in getting him on very fast, whereas the right-hand gun pushed on fast and flushed a regular string of birds, extending away to the left, and killed. The string of birds, however, merely revolved halfway round on their own axis, as it were, those at the extreme left pitching again at once, and those from the right going round them and settling also, strange to say, right in the face of the second dog and shooter, but not near enough for him to shoot. He then drew on his dog with the help of the keeper, and precisely the same thing happened to him as it had to the first shooter. The birds, in fact, came to be pointed and shot. Of course the reason of this strange behaviour was that the flying birds saw the others at the extreme end of the long line rise and settle, and they all followed the example twice, in spite of men and dogs being within 100yds. of them. There must have been 80 to 100 partridges. The turnips favoured the breaking up of this big pack, so that when any of the birds rose they had not to go far before the presence of others seemed to induce them to settle again. The result of the morning's shooting in those turnips was 27½ brace, and on examination every bird proved to be young. It never transpired who had lost his tame birds, but certainly somebody, near or far, had done so.

If everybody who buys partridges' eggs recognises how thoroughly useful he will probably be to his fellow-countrymen, the practice may safely be left to the public spirit of the game preserver.

ARGUS OLIVE.



AT THE THEATRE

MR. GEORGE ALEXANDER is once again leading the movement. He sees that costume drama is on its last legs, and he has taken us back to the most stable of all dramatic fare—the play of a strong, straightforward, sentimental story of to-day, dependent upon

coincidences, villainies, long-suffering virtue; melodrama, in fact, but told with the restraint, the elegance, the at least superficial truth to nature, in which high-falutin' has no part, heroic declamation no share. This style of piece we know as "drawing-room melodrama," the type to which "Captain Swift," "Jim the Penman," "Fedora," and many others of the most successful dramas of our time belong. We expect Mr. Walter Frith's play, "The Man of Forty," to fill the St. James's Theatre for a long time to come.

There is no extraordinary ingenuity or originality in the argument the author lays before us. It is rather in the neatness of his conduct of the intrigue that he scores; more than all, his play pleases and interests because of the very admirable and finished acting which glosses over all its weaknesses and renders feasible its exaggerations. In admiring the acting we lose sight of the theatrical motives which inspire the chief scoundrel to his malpractices. It is a great thing for Mr. Alexander and his comrades to have achieved. Not that the play is a poor one, but it belongs to that class which relies upon violent extremes of action for its effects, and at such a theatre as the St. James's, were these not softened and varnished by the perfection of acting, they would be likely to strike the cultured audiences as highly-coloured.

When one says that the lady beloved by Mr. Lee Fanshawe, the man of forty, good fellow, millionaire, M.P., is not the widow he believes her to be, but is in reality the wife of Dunster, a young vagabond who is pressing his attentions upon the millionaire's well-beloved daughter, it will be seen that Mr. Frith has not denied himself a sufficiently startling basis for his play. And when one adds that the widow is a good and sweet woman, who, ardently loving the man of forty, allows

herself to be terrorised by her husband—whom she has thought to be dead—into keeping the secret of his return to life from the man she loves, by the threat that the scoundrel will sue for a divorce, with Fanshawe as co-respondent, and will take from her her children and lead them horrible lives, it will be seen that the plot proceeds along broad melodramatic lines.

For a time the poor woman consents, and hears her husband declare to her lover that he, Dunster, is dead. But when she discovers his reasons for this, that he intends to go through a form of marriage with Fanshawe's daughter, she dares everything and tells the truth. This is the climax of the play, and a thrilling and stirring climax it is. Fanshawe's horror on learning the truth, his contempt for the woman who has deceived him, are naturally extreme. The scene in which he meets Dunster, takes from him his daughter's letter and the ring which to him is sacred, for it came from the hand of his dead wife, and has been given by his daughter to the man she imagines she loves, is a strenuous one. It ends conventionally, but none the less effectively, by the death of Dunster from heart disease, who thus leaves the road clear for the happiness of all the others.

Such is the play—its strength and its weakness can be gathered from the narration. One has to accept a good deal, and to make-believe considerably; but, granting these conditions, the story makes a never-ceasing appeal to the emotions of the audience.

And, as we have said, it is acted to perfection. Mr. George Alexander has never been better suited with a character than that of Fanshawe, who, until the tragic moment of the play, has been a gay-hearted, mercurial, humorous, young, middle-aged man, who only now and again has allowed one to see the earnestness and affection which exist beneath the surface of don't-care-ism. Mr. Alexander played with the touch of a capital light comedian until the time came for strenuousness, and then he rose to the occasion vigorously, artistically, and convincingly.

Miss Granville, though not playing a character necessary to the central motive of the piece, won the other acting honours of



the evening. As a woman madly in love with Fanshawe, vindictive in her hate for the woman who has his heart, Miss Granville played with a truth, a reality, a naturalness and effect past all praise. Mr. H. B. Irving, in a double part, that of Dunster, the villainous young actor, and Dunster, his brother, the sedate secretary to Fanshawe, differentiated the characters very skilfully and played both exceedingly well. Another capital little character study was that given by Mr. Aubrey Smith as a Scotch bore of spongy tendencies. Miss Fay Davis played the part of the daughter—which gives her no opportunity for more than sweetness and womanliness—very prettily. Miss Julie Opp, as the wife of Dunster, acted with force and spirit and earnestness, but could not give it just that touch which makes one forget that it is acting merely. Mrs. Mæsmore Morris, Miss Esmé Beringer, Miss Carlotta Addison, Mr. Alfred Bonnin, and Mr. Dennis Eadie were all beyond reproach.

ONCE again the Haymarket is the home of mirth and artistic delight. The revival of "The Rivals" has even more points of attraction than that of "She Stoops to Conquer." To the taste of the writer, it is a much better play for one thing; secondly, in some instances, it is even better played. For the Lydia Languish of Miss Winifred Emery, no language of praise could be too warm. It is everything we imagine it ought to be; it is surely everything that Sheridan intended. Sentimental, with the sentimentality of the day, petulant, with the petulance of the character, affectionate, with the affection of all true women, it is a picture wholly delightful.

The Bob Acres of Mr. Cyril Maude has met with a more divergent judgment, and very legitimately. While, personally, we consider it a piece of humorous acting of a high order, many disagree with its departure from tradition, with its lightness and with its absence of the stolidity which has become part and parcel of the character; we ourselves think it an admirable character study, which does no violence to the intentions of Sheridan as exposed in his dialogue, though it does not follow the lines laid down by all the famous exponents of the character. Its humour is fine-cut, not broad, but of its fun-making qualities there can be no doubt whatever.

Nothing could be better than the Anthony of Mr. Sidney Valentine—a fine, sturdy, forcible piece of work, full of ripe vigour and virility. Mr. Paul Arthur, as Captain Absolute, acts with ease and refinement; Mr. Beveridge, as O'Trigger, displays the finished method and the rich sense of humour which distinguish him; Mr. Frederick Harrison makes a dignified Faulkland; Mr. Holman Clark a capital Fagg; Miss Lily Hanbury a charming, stately, and beautiful Julia. Mrs. Calvert, as Mrs. Malaprop, acts with a dry and acid humour which gives point to all the fun there is in the part—it is an unconventional but very clever and amusing study.

THE revival of "Antony and Cleopatra" by Mr. Benson and his company at the Lyceum was marked by the usual characteristics of the performances of that organisation—care and completeness without any considerable amount of taste or imagination in the staging; much excellent acting in the secondary and subordinate parts; inadequate treatment of the leading masculine and feminine characters. While nothing could be much better than the Pompeius of Mr. Oscar Asche, the Enobarbus of Mr. Lyall Swete, the Demetrius of Mr. Warburton, the Menas of Mr. Asheton Tonge, the Clown of Mr. Weir, and the Iras of Miss Brayton, the Antony of Mr. Benson and the Cleopatra of Mrs. Benson were undistinguished, uninspired, unconvincing.

THE "boom" of "Quo Vadis" has begun in real earnest. Mr. Wilson Barrett, holding by contract from the Polish novelist all rights in the story; Miss Jeannette Gilder, the well-known American journalist, believing herself to hold the same rights; Messrs. Whitney and Canby, two American managers, with no pretence to any rights whatever, are all on the warpath. Mr. Barrett's version is now in rehearsal and will be produced very shortly; Messrs. Whitney and Canby will attempt to draw first blood by a prior production at the Adelphi; while Miss Gilder is apparently quiescent. No doubt her turn will come if the two other versions are successful, for there will probably be "Quo Vadis" in various forms all over the place, and there is no means of protecting it, *per se*, though "pirates" may be caught on side issues. As far as one can judge, Mr. Barrett is entitled to the consideration of all honourable English managers.

Miss Lily Hanbury has been engaged for the part of Gretchen when Mr. Tree produces "Rip Van Winkle" at Her Majesty's Theatre.

PHIBUS.



THE time of the coming of birds extends with us from the middle of March to the close of May. Their coming is like their going—silently, and in the

night. For it is one of the mysteries of migration that it is performed in the darkness, and generally against a head wind. When the first celandine lights up the meadow, we know that in a few days the swallows will be skimming over it. The turning up of the brown land brings the wheatear, and the first flowering elm the chiff-chaff. The pink-scaled buds of the beech tell us when to look for the willow-warbler, and now the greenfinch begins to troll to the sun. Each flower has its bird, and so surely as the starry gems march up the way, so the bird procession silently comes. On some March morning we see the vanishing white form of the fallow-chat. The snow streaks have not yet gone from the fences, and only the black ashbuds are showing. Catkins hang on the hazel and the first green plume tufts from the larch. The wheatear is the pioneer of the birds. It returns infallibly to its old haunts—to limestone wall, to boulder-strewn escarpment, to sand-dune by the sea. This is Tennyson's "sea-blue bird of March," and everywhere among the sea-pinks it causes a new light and a new interest in every stranded boulder.

On some April morning we walk out in the fields and are told by the willow-wrens, very plaintively and very prettily, that if we please spring has really come. From the top of a beech or elm comes the soft, mellow song, which tells of the returning sun. It is essentially one of the sounds of the time of the coming of birds, and almost every tree in the woods has its willow-wren. An incessantly active little bird, it loses no time in tuning its song after its arrival. Where the early orchis, the violet, and the cowslip bloom, the yellow wrens have their nest. When this is approached the little birds become violently

agitated, giving out at intervals a melancholy cry. Almost earlier than the willow-wren in its coming is the chiff-chaff. It sees the first primrose peep through the dead leaves, and just as it is almost the first to come so it is the last to go. Upon the steep banks of the Greenwash is a copse, thickly sheltering, running ivy covering its floor. Tangled thicket and brushwood are there, and in this locality we hear the first notes of the bird.

These can never amount to a song, but are emitted with a vivacious cheerfulness that is always welcome. With the returning days of April the swallows come again and utter their pleasing twitter in the warm air. First the martin, then the little bank swallow, the true swallow, and the high-flying, loud-screaming swift. The swallows and the warm April showers remind us of each other, and each brings abundance of insects. The purple back, the long forked tail, the skimming flight—how familiar are these in the sweet birds of return, and the bronzed under parts just touched with the glow of the African sun.

When the meadows are alive with May-flower the cry of the cuckoo comes up from the woods. Our cuckoo is a solitary, unsociable bird, and it is mobbed by a screeching throng immediately it makes its appearance. Even to most country people the cuckoo is but a wandering voice, and is rarely seen. It seldom arrives before the middle of April, and then takes about ten days to travel up the country. Upon its arrival it has a call quite distinct from the well-known "cuckoo" which it gives out later in the season. This is frequently heard in the early morning, and when the birds are pairing. The number of males seems greatly to preponderate over that of females, and we have frequently seen one of the latter chased by six or seven of the former, these flying and calling together. This pairing cry may be represented by a succession of the initial syllables, cuck-cuck-cuck, dying away in a prolonged oo-o-o-o. In districts sparsely covered with trees, the nest of the meadow-pipit is the one most often chosen by the cuckoo in which to deposit its egg. Of these it lays a series, though never more than one in the same nest, or, at least, at the same time. This we suspected, and afterwards confirmed by dissecting a bird, the ovary of which contained five eggs, though in widely different stages of maturity. It is now well known that the cuckoo does not actually lay its eggs in the nests of other birds, but conveys them thither in its bill. Last year a cuckoo deposited an egg in the nest of a meadow-lark on a heather brae. Besides this the nest contained four

eggs of its rightful owner, and all hatched simultaneously. Upon the third day after this the four young pipits were literally shouldered out of the nest, but by a quite unconscious movement on the part of the yellow-billed usurper. Like the nightingale, the cuckoo rarely sings after the breeding season is fairly inaugurated.

The delicate leaves of the beech tell us that now we may expect the redstart, and soon his rich colours enliven various spots on the lap of cultivation. The "fire-tail" is quite one of our most beautiful summer migrants, and comes to us from the South about mid-April. But the bird is rather a creature of circumstance than of time. It rarely leaves its Southern haunts, be the date what it may, if the foliage and insect food have not preceded it. The bird has a peculiar habit of jerking its tail, as if to attract one to the most brightly-coloured part of its plumage; and this has given rise to many expressive provincial names, one of which is mentioned above. In form and traits it has much in common with the redbreast and hedge-accentor, and whilst watching it we have discovered a habit—almost peculiar to the true fly-catcher—of darting out at intervals upon passing insects, and then quickly returning to its perch. The song of this species is sweet and full of vivacity, although rarely long continued. Its six round eggs are of a blue so beautiful in tone as to be comparable to nothing but themselves.

A visitant that follows closely in the wake of the redstart is the ring-ouzel. We first see its white-crescented form amid the wild moors and scenes where it breeds. It follows the spring, and spends with us its summer among the mountains. Coming in flocks with the warblers, the birds disperse in pairs to their lone haunts, and live among the green moss and dripping waterfalls. A week or so after their arrival the male birds begin to sing, and often do so far into the night. Its song, though sometimes harsh, is often low, sweet, and trilling. Then there is its grating call-note, apprising us first of its arrival, but soon mellowed and toned as the pairing season advances. Among the shepherds and fell folk the ring-ouzel has many provincial names, white-breasted blackbird, ring-thrush, rock-ouzel, and moor blackbird being among them.

On a day in May, sitting by the ditchside with a handful of pink apple blossom, a crane ran out into the fresh green grass, and gave out its characteristic spring call. Although May-flower and March marigold were blooming all about it, the season is so backward that there was not tallness of grass to hide it, and it soon made back to the shelter of the ditch.

With our face deep buried in summer grass, we are lying on the margin of the wood. All the ground by fast-falling blossom is littered, and the air is instinct with the very breath of life. The starlings, picking among the sheep, are half-buried in the fresh green grass, their metallic plumage flashing in the sun. The sweet breath of kine comes from the cattle that are lazily lying dotted over the meadow. What a gentle, soft-eyed creature is the cow. A picture of quiet contentment the huge ruminant suggests, as it stands belly-deep in golden buttercups. How dewy its nose, delicately fringed its ears, and white gleaming its horns. Insects swarm about the cattle, and the wagtails flit everywhere around them. That beautifully slim yellow bird which has just alighted is Ray's wagtail, and one of

our most brightly-coloured summer visitors. From the habit just indicated the farmers call it the cow-bird. There it runs among the fresh grass, picking innumerable insects from the teeming blades, and now and then performing kind offices for its friend the cow by flitting up under her belly and ridding her of some troublesome insect. Were we to watch the yellow bird to its home, we should find the nest under some overhanging tuft, probably placed near the cool stream in which the cows love to stand.

Bird songs and sounds flood all the land, and half-a-dozen larks are singing up there against the blue; they almost make the sunshine vocal. The grass grows tall by the hedgeside, and the ditch is done in a setting of green and gold. All life seems to love the stream—it is the chief artery of the land. From the wild service-tree in the hedge goes towering up a little brown bird, singing and fluttering the while, and then slowly descending to the twig from which it started. The song is pleasant and is that of the tree-pipit. No time is lost after its April arrival in treating us to its lark-like song, and this continues through breeding-time and on into summer. After indulging in its aerial evolutions for a time, the grasshopper-lark drops down to the red champions, among which is its moss-fibred nest. A bird loved of the country-folk, for they have many provincial names of their own, of which pipit-lark, field-titling, and tree-lark are a few.

Day by day, and for hours together, we have watched the pretty incidents of a bird drama. A pair of blue tits have been searching out some hole among the old elms, and it has been "house-hunting" indeed. They have examined every hole and crevice in wall and bole of tree, and have rejected each in turn, for reasons only known to themselves. For some days they have eaten little, and have worked themselves into a terrible state of excitement. It is only after some time, when they are quite tired out, that the chase ends, and they select some hole which seems much less likely for their purpose than many they have visited. It was not hard to tell they had fixed upon a domicile, for they lingered lovingly about the spot for some days ere beginning to build. But one morning we saw the blue bird enter the hole, and by many soft endearments try to induce his yet coy bride to follow. He indulged in many soft twitterings unknown to himself or his species at other times, and used a thousand blandishments; and yet she refused to respond. Then he flew off a little way and brought back a fluffy feather, entered the hole, emerged again, and turned himself like a many-coloured acrobat performing the most marvellous feats; but all will not do.

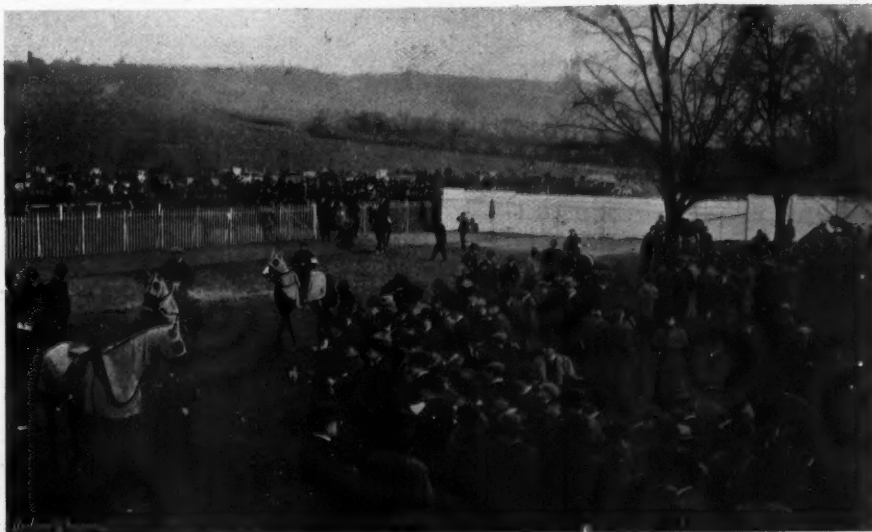
Then he loses his temper and tries to drive her into the interior, but this she will have none of; and so, beaten and crushed, he sits on a bough and deplores her waywardness aloud. But in a few mornings, passing the spot, we find that a crisis has occurred in the little drama, and that the couple are flying busily to and fro with materials for the nest. Soon the hen bird presses to her breast six priceless pearls—white, speckled with brown and red, and in such a setting! This, however, is the spring-time of love, and soon six little mouths have to be fed incessantly for fourteen hours a day, and even this is continued over two or three weeks. At the end of that time six balls of fluffy blue feathers pass down the hedgerow and out into the wide world of birddom.

WHEATEAR.

RACING NOTES—THE PRINCE'S NATIONAL.

ONE but those who live on one of those South Country lines the unpunctuality of which is only equalled by their cynical disregard of the comfort of passengers, can fully appreciate the pleasure of travelling by the Great Northern, the London and North-Western, or the Midland. The comfortable carriages, the many conveniences, and, above all, the smooth-running trains, make travelling a pleasure rather than a penance. To go racing in comfort, and still more to return swiftly and punctually, add not a little to our enjoyment of the sport, but unfortunately this happy state of affairs seldom falls to the lot of the racing man.

The weather was of the worst, for the cold wind would chill the hopes of the most convinced supporter of a favourite. In the Lincolnshire Handicap many of my friends did not cease to tell me of the great chance of Survivor and Berzak, but, as my readers will bear witness, I have never believed in either. Sir Geoffrey was a horse that I thought had a great chance, but no one could have imagined, except his trainer, what a certainty he was. His win, however, was a triumph of condition; the horse was fit, and yet not overdone, full of fire and dash, and it is ancient history to say that he had won the race before half a-mile had been traversed. Strike-a-Light,



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THE PADDOCK.

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the second, will win later on, as will Damocles and Gerolstein. Sir Geoffrey's stable won a good deal of money, though probably not quite so much as imaginative scribes have attributed to them.

But of greater interest than the deeds of handicap horses is the first appearance of the two year olds of the season. The Brocklesby is not the race it once was, the wise ruling of the Jockey Club having diminished in value the importance of the early two year old races. It so happened, however, that the race had considerable interest, the winner turning up in Mr. Musker's Melton—Britta filly. Britta was by Paradox, so that the blood of the two great rivals was combined in the winner of the first two year old race of importance of this season. Melton was a very handsome horse, and seems likely to be well worth the 8,000 guineas it cost to bring him back from Italy. The Britta filly had by no means the best of the bad starts which must be put to the debit of the starting-gate, but the pace at which she came up from within the distance, and the way she won from the favourite, Hector Mdaconald, suggest that she may grow



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COMING BACK TO SCALE.

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presence of the Prince of Wales, yet a great deal remains for the good horses, well trained, contending over a difficult course. In spite of the success of this year's "Liverpool" it would be idle to contend that the decay of steeplechasing was not shown in the poor quality of the horses, with the exception of the three favourites. I noted Ambush II.'s firm position in the market last week, which, of course, pointed to the confidence of his stable. In common with many other people, I thought the weight was too much. The Prince's horse, however, has made great improvement; he has the size and scope which are desirable in a Grand National horse, and, above all, that depth of girth which is so necessary for staying power, and which history tells was so marked in his great predecessor Lottery. For a steeplechase horse, if he has quite a light middle or short back, ribs do not matter so much.

Hidden Mystery is not an easy horse to ride, but after Hurst Park I expected him to fall, though not in so tragic a manner. Had Covert Hack not served his stable companion so well, the result would still have been the same. Manifesto ran a great horse, but, as was to be expected, he could not carry the weight. The old horse tired to nothing at the finish, and Barsac beat him fairly for second place. The wonder of the race was Breemount's Pride, who ran well and was placed fourth

—no bad feat for a mare with a tube in her throat.

No one could possibly write a racing article this week without making some observations on the starting-gate. There can be no doubt that the starts



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SIR GEOFFREY AFTER THE RACE.

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into a useful mare, and perhaps something more. The Schoolbook filly, which won the Sefton Park Plate on the Grand National day, is another, and, her stable say, an even more promising, daughter of Melton. What if Melton proved a good exchange for Flying Fox? With the Grand National we practically take leave of steeplechasing. A contemporary, I see, has endeavoured to defend the practice of stopping horses in order to get weight reduced. His argument is that small owners must live, and to live they must make money. The necessity is not obvious. What is plain is that the horse runs or should run for money supplied partly by the public and partly by the owners of the other horses, and he has no right on the course unless he is intended to win if he can. The question of the ethics of the case does not come in at all. The rules of racing practically lay down that owners and jockeys wilfully trying to stop horses must be punished. The authorities allow the rule to become a dead letter. "Very well, it ought to be removed," which is absurd, everyone would say; then it ought to be enforced, and from this there is no escape. Besides, the fact remains that the state of the illegitimate sport is a by-word, and that sportsmen, whether owners or spectators, are giving meetings under Grand National rules a wide berth. How popular a sport steeplechasing might be if good horses contended honestly for sufficient stakes, let the Liverpool race bear witness. Let us deduct something from the interest in the race itself for the fine day and the



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THE ARRIVAL OF THE ROYAL CARRIAGE.

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were bad both at Lincoln and Liverpool. One contrivance made a most alarming noise when the lever was pulled, and certainly disposed thereby of the chance of the favourite. It is evident that of the various inventions the Jockey Club should choose one and make its use compulsory, so that the conditions may be the same for all horses alike. Personally, I do not like the machine at all; but to echo the sensible words of a well-known trainer, we have got it and we must make the best of it. I am going to watch the results and the working carefully, and to see if the one advantage, the lessening of delays, counterbalances the other and undoubted disadvantages. The jockeys dislike it, and not, I think, unreasonably, for it lays them open to blame if they do not get away, and is certainly a new danger. Moreover, it diminishes the chances in favour of the skilled rider. Archer's finishes were often wonderful, but his starts probably won him more races. The starting-gate favours a dash away and a struggle to keep the advantage thus gained, and this, indirectly, is likely to be an advantage to the American style of riding.

Now for such light as the past week has thrown on future events. Elopement won the Union Jack Stakes, nor was that any very extraordinary feat; but I am disposed to pay much less attention to the horses behind a winner than to the style of his running. Nothing could have been better than Elopement's level, easy stride nor the steady way in which he galloped on to the finish. The colt has wintered as well as anything, and will probably win the Two Thousand, and perhaps be heard of at Doncaster. The same cause—the starting-gate—this cost the Bre'a colt the March Two Year Old Stakes enabled the Polly Eccles



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AMBUSH II. GOING OUT.

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Polly Eccles colt, clear of the scrimmage, obtained an advantage he kept to the end. Nevertheless, the race was probably right; this colt will add something to the fame of the Australian sire Trenton, now at the Cobham Stud. When this reaches my readers they will perhaps be glancing over it in a comfortable Midland train on their way to Derby. The racing at this centre is always good, and will be of more class than either Northampton or Warwick. Forcett and King's Messenger are two horses likely to run well for their respective engagements. The former may have improved since Lincoln, where, all things considered, his performance was not a bad one. True, the race was a slow-run one, but the going was deep, and races seldom make good timing when there is no finish. Mornington Cannon had a very easy ride in his third Lincolnshire Handicap.

VEDETTE.



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THE PARADE IN FRONT OF THE STAND.

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colt to win the Molyneux Stakes at Liverpool. As she was out of the same stable there was some justice in it. The start in this case was a very curious one; when the gate flew up the frightened youngsters clustered together like a flock of pigeons. The wonder is that they did not knock each other over. The

A DAY IN GALWAY.

"I SAY, old chap," cried Jack Harding, bursting into my room one evening as I was sitting reading, "I want you to go down with me to Galway to-morrow—read that," and he threw a very dirty-looking epistle, smelling of the vilest tobacco, across to me.

The hieroglyphics penned thereon would have puzzled the experts of the Post Office, but finally I managed to decipher: "Dear sir, I send you these few lions." "The devil he does! Are you starting a menagerie, Jack?"

"Oh! shut up!" replied that irascible individual, "and read; it's from Tim Mullins, my man down at the place I have in Galway."

"Oh! I see. Tim's 'lions' are penned, not penned. At any rate, the lions haven't fallen in pleasant places to Tim, if I can judge by his and your accounts."

Jack had not had an unhappy life until, in an evil hour, an uncle took it into his head to die and leave him this unlucky little property in the wild Woodford



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THE START FOR THE GRAND NATIONAL.

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district of County Galway. Jack's proprietorship began about the same time as the land troubles, and the Ballyloughguttery estate proved a veritable "white elephant" to poor Jack. He thought he could do great things at first, and started by spending any little money he had got on the place in improvements. He did some draining, built new cabins, and put on new roofs; but his sad experience was similar to a scriptural one in which the new cloth was inserted in the old garments—the rent was made worse.

Poor Tim Mullins, the steward, had a bad time of it too. His "thrifle" of hay had been burned; he had been beaten half-a-dozen times, and fired at once or twice in a few years; and this epistle was to implore "the masthur" to come down, as he could "get no good, at all, at all" out of the tenants.

"Well! will you come?" asked Jack, when I had puzzled through the document. "You'll get a couple of days' good rough shooting."

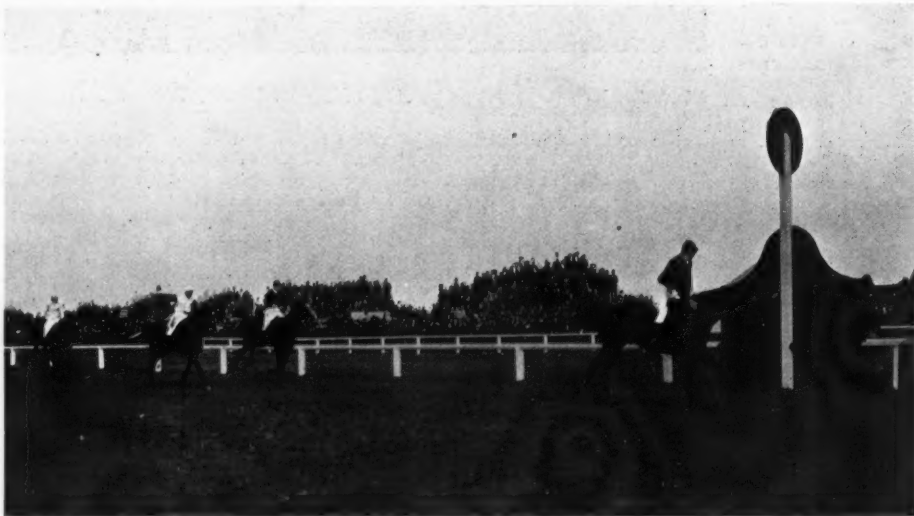
"More likely get shot myself, I should fancy," was my reply; "but I'll chance it."

"All right," said Jack; "have your gun and traps ready, and I'll call for you early. Never mind a dog—we'll get one there."

It was a long, dreary drive to my friend's place in Galway, especially as it



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was a wet, cold morning in October, but things brightened up a bit when we had crossed the "lordly Shannon" by the fine bridge at Portumna, where we spent a couple of hours at the Clanrickarde Arms, and refreshed the inner man. Starting for Ballyloughguttery, our way lay through the great Clanrickarde estates, where nearly every tenant in those days was a gamekeeper, and where there appeared to be plenty of game. By the groves and plantations the rabbits were scuttling about, while here and there a hare was lopping round picking up an evening meal of clover. Near the demesne numbers of pheasants were pecking about, and as we got into the wilder country we saw several coveys of partridges on the little stubble fields by the roadside, and could hear the grouse in the bogs through which we passed; while on the bleak moors great quantities of plover—green and golden—were congregated.

It was dusk by the time we got to Tim Mullins' cabin, and after some good "rashers and eggs," washed down by some of Tim's best, which had never paid a penny to Her Majesty, we sat round the huge turf fire in the kitchen while Tim told all his woes about the tenants. After business had been gone through, pleasure was touched upon by Jack's telling Tim that I wanted to get some shooting while



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THE PRINCE MEETS HIS HORSE.

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I was there. Tim's declaration that "the devil a better day's shootin' could be got in all Connaught than here" was very encouraging, and a programme for the morrow was speedily sketched out for me by Tim.

"Patsy Hoolahan was the very man you want; he knows ivry spot for moiles round where game's to be got, and shure he has the foineest setter dog in the whole country."

Next morning the redoubtable Patsy appeared, accompanied by the "foineest setter"—a miserable-looking half-tarved mongrel of no particular breed. The Hoolahan combination did not look a very promising one to me, but Tim, with many strange West-of-Ireland oaths, swore that whatever was above ground in the shape of game, Patsy and Micky, his dog, would make it out.

We started off, Patsy striding off at a pace which kept me in a fast jog trot. I found him a most reticent character, and though I plied him with questions, I could get nothing out of him but monosyllabic answers. All I could glean was that our destination was "Driminahawn," and the object "shnipes." After keeping to the road for a bit, Patsy turned sharply into a field, in which were a couple of sedgy ponds, and vouchsafed the my-terious information: "Tail!"

Whether I was to keep behind him, or what, I did not know, but evidently Micky knew what was in the wind, for he stole in front, and from the nearest pool three teal rose within nice distance. I was fortunate enough to bring down a brace of them, and by doing so evidently shot myself into Patsy's good graces, as he became more communicative. He had marked down the third teal in a spring drain about 300yds. off, and led me straight to the spot, when the bird rose and I shot it. A shout behind me from Patsy made me wheel sharp round in time to get a long shot at a mallard which had risen from the drain, and I had the satisfaction to see it come down with a "thud" on the field, and flap into the thick sedge in the drain. A whoop of triumph from Hoolahan, and Micky darted off, and was quickly splashing about through the sedge, to reappear with the mallard in a few seconds. The dog rose 50 per cent. in my estimation after this, and I soon found that he was a wonderfully intelligent animal, but quite ignorant of the recognised canine etiquette peculiar to sporting dogs. Crossing some high grass fields, we came to a long strip of "cut-away bog," which I understood to be Driminahawn—the promised land of the "shnipes." A large sedgy marsh, or "flash," as Patsy called it, was at one end, and the dog was familiar with it, for he stole in a crouching way on it as stealthily as possible. Before we got within shot a big "wisp" of some forty of fifty snipe rose "skaiping" from it, and went flying round and round for some minutes, when they separated into twos and threes, and distributed themselves about all over the "cut-away" bog. We picked up a couple which had not got up with the main body, and then Patsy led me to the end of this long bog, and commenced to shoot down-wind. Patsy showed his wisdom in this manoeuvre, for the birds lay well, and gave me nice cross shots as they turned to fly up-wind. In our beat down this strip of bog we got six brace of snipe and another teal, the dog working splendidly, and never springing a bird.

After this bit of bog-trotting, Patsy took me off to some low hills covered with furze, where I got a couple of rabbits, and in a tillage field adjoining we came on a good covey of partridges and got two and a-half brace out of it. Patsy was now fairly loaded, and I suggested a move for home, which he did not object to, but said we would take Curraghmore on our way and get some more partridges. Curraghmore was a large tract of rough grass-land interspersed with thickets of briar and clumps of furze. We had hardly got into it, and were beating along a high fence, outside which ran a thick plantation, when Micky came to a stiff set at a tuft of high ferns.

"A hare!" whispered Patsy.

The dog would not stir, so his master stole forward and gave the clump a tap with his stick, when "on whirring wing" rose a fine cock pheasant. I was a bit flurried and missed him with my right barrel, but the left tumbled him with a broken wing on the other side of the fence. Micky was after him like lightning, and I had just replaced the cartridges when the gun was whipped out of my hand and Patsy sprang on the top of the fence.

I now saw a man with a gun to his shoulder covering Micky, who had retrieved the wounded pheasant, and heard Patsy yell, as he covered the man with my gun:

"Shoot! Mick Flannery, an' by the Father above us I'll blow the schull off ye!"

Sulkily the man lowered his gun, and, with a scowl of hatred, said:

"It's another six months in Galway Gaol ye want, Pat Hoolahan, wid yer poachin'."

"It's the gallows that ye want, Mick Flannery! Ye seed an' breed o' spies an' informers!" shrieked Hoolahan.

Jumping on the fence, I caught hold of the gun from Patsy, and called to the man:

"For Heaven's sake go away at once if you don't want this madman to shoot you!"

Sullenly the man moved off, muttering as he went:

"Ve'll hear more o' this, Patsy Hoolahan."

Patsy, seeing the enemy in retreat, gave a war-whoop which would not have disgraced a North American Indian, and as he performed a dance of triumph on the bank, he whirled the pheasant over his head and gave vent to a series of the most discordant yells, accompanied by the information, "Here's Hoolahan!"

Seeing the excited state of my henchman's nerves, I moved off as quickly as possible, thankful to escape having been the witness of a murder.

I found on reaching Tim Mullins's mansion that Flannery was one of the



W. A. Rouch. RACING NOTES: AMBUSH II. AFTER THE RACE.

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"Lord's" (Clanrickarde) keepers, and that a deadly feud existed between him and Hoolahan, in consequence of his being instrumental in putting the latter in gaol for poaching.

The bag, with four teal, a duck, two and a-half brace of partridge, eight brace of snipe, two rabbits, and the pheasant, was a capital mixed one, and I was thoroughly well pleased with my first day in Galway. HEATH.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A PLAGUE OF MAGPIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I would be much obliged if you would tell me a certain banishment, by death or otherwise, of magpies, which have become a regular plague in these parts, increasing to a great extent, and I am fearful as regards the smaller birds' nests in spring, as I well know the marauding parties these egg suckers organise. I have tried poisoning meat by cyanide of potassium, but only resulted, as far as I know, in the death of one rook. If you would be able to inform me of an efficacious way of banishing these birds I would feel much obliged.—X.Y., Sallins, County Kildare.

[Magpies, when numerous, are certainly a great pest, but putting down poisoned meat is a distinctly dangerous practice and not likely to be effective. A better plan is to shoot them, which, notwithstanding their almost unnatural cunning, is quite an easy matter if a decoy can be procured.—ED.]

LABOURERS' COTTAGES AND ROWTON HOUSES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The proprietor and Editor of COUNTRY LIFE have done many readers a practical service in publishing the article and plans describing how four cottages, both commodious and pleasing to the eye, can be built for £560. The reference to the facilities for borrowing from the Lands' Improvement Company, sanctioned by the Board of Agriculture, will also be news to some owners, especially to lady landed proprietors. I am glad to see, however, that you do not hold out any false hopes that such buildings for the rural working classes is ever remunerative, in the sense that building for the urban working classes is, as for instance in Rowton Houses. Yet your building is far, very far, cheaper per head than that of the Rowton Houses. In these it costs £70 per head to put up the bricks and mortar and fittings. In Mr. Quennel's cottages, taking the average of a labourer's family as three children and the wife, and reckoning the children as using half of an adult's house room, they cost only £40 apiece to house, yet the thing cannot be done at a profit, because, practically, only one pays the rent for three and a-half, viz., the father, whereas in the Rowton Houses each inmate "pays his shot." The rents of these cottages on the Rowton House basis, of 6l. per head per day, would be a little over 12s. per week. Deducting from this the cost of light, hot water, and fire which are given in in Rowton House, e.g., 3s. per week, they would average 9s. per week. But as the capital cost is only a little more than half that of Rowton House buildings, and the rates are less, we may halve this again, and on that basis the owner and builder of these cottages ought to expect and require a rent of 4s. 6d. per week, to make the profit, viz., 5 per cent., which the Rowton buildings do. The utmost he will get will be, as you say, 2s. 6d. per week, and with wages at 12s. per week, not that. This is most gloomy finance, but it shows the difficulty which the producer of food meets in competing with other food-raisers all over the world, like Russian and Indian peasants who are content to live in a house of practically one room. I shall look forward with interest to Mr. Lutzen's plans, and meantime remain—A COUNTRY LANDLORD.

BADGERS IN SUSSEX.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—To most people the badger is a very unfamiliar animal by reason of its nocturnal habits. But there is reason to believe that this little "English bear" (it is really of the weasel tribe) is a comparatively common wild beast in this country, and has safely survived where others of its former wild companions have become extinct. The specimen shown in our photograph, a fine female badger, was shot recently at Wick in Sussex, having been found in a



supposed rabbit hole; from this it was dislodged, and at once exhibited the extraordinary courage and tenacity of its tribe. Not only did it drive off the big fox-terrier shown in the picture—a dog which has twice successfully fought and killed a fox—but it cowed a second dog, a game little wire-haired terrier, then attacked the keeper's assistant, being only stopped by a shot in the head. About two miles from the spot a family of young badgers was dug out and killed last spring, and a neighbouring farmer met three, gambolling and playing together, as they ran across one of his meadows in the early morning.—C.

TAMENESS AND MEMORY OF A BADGER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have just come across an instance of retentive memory and affection on the part of a badger that I think may be interesting. The creature was caught as a baby, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, and brought into one of the towns near, where it became quite tame, and would follow one of the little boys about like a pet dog. One day it disappeared, and the conclusion was that a malefactor had killed it, or that it had made off to the wilds. It disappeared in May. In the following March it was found again in the garden at night, and taken to the stables. It seemed to remember all its old friends perfectly, and would eat sugar or anything else that a badger will eat (and there is little that it will not) out of the children's hands. And there it is at the time of writing. Whether it had been in the garden all the months since its disappearance, or whether it had returned there, very likely hibernating during the colder months, at the beginning of winter, and had shown above ground again only at the beginning of the warm weather, we cannot very well know, but the interesting thing is that it should have remembered the kindness with which it had been treated before, and should have lost so little of its tameness and affection for man during the greater part of a year that it was at large. It was in very good condition, fat, and with a good coat, when it was retaken, so probably it had been out of its hibernating quarters for some time.—H.

RIFLE SHOOTING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been much interested in your two recent leaders, of February 24th, "Rifle Ranges for Public Schools," and March 17th, "The Pastime of Rifle Shooting." I think all will endorse your recommendation that there should be more and better rifle shooting in schools throughout the country, and I venture to make a suggestion which I have not seen mentioned. Morris tubes are recommended as useful for preliminary rifle shooting, but why not the air-gun? There are some excellent small air-guns now made which are put in the hands of boys and are quite dangerous and accurate enough. If an air-gun on a similar principle were made of the size of the Service rifle, I think that it would form as good practice as a Morris tube, and any corner could be found for a range. There would be no noise to disturb invalids and students, and the saving of expense of ammunition would be of immense advantage in schools and country, where pocket-money is not plentiful. The labour of forcing down the spring before each discharge would be a good muscular exercise for boys. I was captain of my school shooting (then) eleven, and in South Africa have had to depend on my gun for dinner, and never regret having learnt to shoot when young.—J. B. C.

P.S.—I never have used a Morris tube, but have had much pleasure out of an air-gun.

AN AUSTRIAN RIFLE RANGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I send you a photographic view of a Styrian rifle range which a friend sends me in the shape of a post-card. As I know the place well (Admont, a small country town of perhaps 1,000 or 1,500 inhabitants), I can describe the details. The photograph is taken just beyond the one safety screen, the shooting being done at the distance of 160 paces, or about 140 yds. The butt is a trifle over 6 in. in diameter, and no shots outside it score. Over the target there are ornamental figures, by which each of the eight targets is known. The hills in the background are not close up to the butt, the intervening ground being occupied by a railroad and farmhouses scattered about. At this range they also have a running stag for rifle practice, and a running hare for gun practice. On the high mountains in the background there are a great many chamois, for they are the favourite stalking

ground of a well-known Austrian sportsman, whose late wife (an English Duchess) spent each year many weeks in their pursuit. I notice that in *COUNTRY LIFE* for March 17th you haul me over the coals for going too far in my praise of the Mannlicher rifle when I state that twenty of the twenty-four men who shot last year for the Elcho Shie'd at Bisley used this rifle. That the four other men used Lee-Enfields is quite true, but it is hardly correct to say that they obtained almost the top scores. The four highest scores, viz., one 209 and three 204, were made by Mannlichers, and of the next four only one was made by a Lee-Enfield.—W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN.

[We are obliged to Mr. Baillie-Grohman for referring us to the N.R.A. report, although he has convicted us of error, due to faulty memory. But he must forgive us for saying that a reference to the figures does not really strengthen his position. True, the Mannlichers made the highest scores; on the other hand, the winning team, handicapped from his point of view by Lee-Enfields in the hands of four men, won by no less than thirty-six points, and it would have won by more if Captain Hopton had not made a couple of mistakes, for which the rifle was not accountable, at 800 yds. Team matches, in which coaching is allowed, are not really a test, and as we hold no brief for the '303, we proceed to state a few facts from the report with regard to individual competitions. In the Albert, Armourer-Sergeant Martin won first prize with a Martin's '256 and rifleite powder. This weapon we imagine to be an improved Mannlicher, made by the man himself. Dr. Sellars headed the Bass with a Mannlicher and rifleite, Mr. Barnett won the Association Cup (900 yds.) with a Mannlicher and Austrian powder. Major the Hon. T. E. Frenantle and Lieutenant-Colonel Mellish won the Doyle, which is shot in pairs, with a Lee-Enfield (cannonite) and a Mannlicher (Schwabe). Mr. Whitehead won the Elkington with a Mannlicher (Schwabe), Mr. J. Rigby headed the Ladies' with a Mannlicher (Austrian). That sounds like a great run for Mannlicher. On the other hand, the two highest scores in the Match Rifle Tyro and Waldegrave were made with Lee-Enfields, in one case with cordite, in the other with cannonite. The Wimbledon Cup (1,100 yds.) was won with a Mannlicher, and so was the Wistow. And this is really not a bad record for the '303, which quite a small proportion of the competitors used as a general rule. That, of course, looks bad for the '303 in itself, and we are disposed to agree that the Mannlicher is rather a better gun than the '303; but our point is that Mr. Baillie Grohman is, and always has been, far too severe in his condemnation of the '303. While we insert his letter and the photograph of the Styrian range, we desire to guard ourselves against any expression of judgment as to the merits or demerits of these little ranges, for the matter is one on which there is room for more than one opinion.—ED.]

A FRENCH RATTIER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Having from time to time noticed photographs of dogs of peculiar breeds in *COUNTRY LIFE*, such as a Cuban terrier and a Summer Palace dog, I think that possibly the enclosed photograph of a French Rattier may be of interest to your readers. This, I believe, is a breed which is very little known or appreciated, though one would have thought that their very ugliness would have recommended this species of dog to some fanciers. Pendennis, the subject of this interview, stands about 13½ in. high at the shoulder, measures 22 in. round the chest, and weighs 19½ lb. He was bought at Bordeaux five years ago as a puppy. There is not much of the sporting dog about him, though we did once persuade him to swell the ranks of a scratch pack with

which we hunted rats, but the cold water did not appeal to him a bit, and he spent most of the time on the river banks barking. He is a sweet-tempered, perfect-mannered dog, and can do almost all the tricks of which dogs are capable. This breed must not be confounded with the French toy bulldog, which, however, it somewhat resembles. Among Pendennis's chief peculiarities are his white eyes; these differ considerably from the one "wall eye" which one meets with so frequently among cross-bred dogs, and especially among Welsh sheepdogs. However, this defect (if, indeed, it is one) has not prevented him from being a prize-winner.—KESTRAL.

